



DISCOVER  
MUG CAKES



MORE FEATURES,  
NEW LOOK!

**FOOD  
HEAVEN**

# Cupcake

## HEAVEN®

AUTUMN 2015

**101**

**FUN NEW  
RECIPES**

Turn Autumn's  
fashion trends into  
cupcakes to impress

**ESSENTIAL ADVICE**

**25 BAKING TIPS YOU  
NEED TO KNOW!**

**How to take the  
best photos of  
your cupcakes**

**With easy to  
follow step-by-  
step instructions**



Haunted house  
cupcakes, p20

# Halloween treats...

Unmissable designs for ghoulish gatherings!

### PROJECT CUPCAKE

Stefani Pollack gets  
creative with cupcakes

### SWEET INSPIRATION

Try *Cupcake Wars* winner  
Alison Riede's dessert cakes

### Indulgent cakes

**Lighter bakes**

**Ask the experts**

**ANTHEM**



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## Cake Club

For people who love to bake!





# Cupcake

## HEAVEN®

### Welcome



Four years ago next month, here in the *Food Heaven* office we decided to launch a magazine based on the wonderful world of cupcakes. Today we're still going strong, and to celebrate we decided to give your favourite cupcake magazine a little face-lift. So this issue you'll still find 101 delicious recipes over the next 113 pages, but you'll also get to enjoy more features, news and interviews. To start things off, we've got 25 top tips on how to guarantee perfect

cupcakes every time, then once you've baked your beautiful creations, turn to page 110 to discover how to take better photos of them to build a record of everything you've baked. Pick your favourites, then send them over to us for our Baked By You gallery on page 114 – the lovely people at Rainbow Dust have joined us to offer a fantastic cake decorating hamper for our star baker every issue.

When you've finished reading the issue and you need a break from your baking, please do join us over on our new look website too at [www.foodheavenmag.com](http://www.foodheavenmag.com). The site is packed with mouthwatering recipes, handy basic techniques, interviews with all your favourite bakers, plus you'll get the chance to win lovely treats in our exclusive giveaways. I really hope you enjoy the issue and I can't wait to see what you think about the new changes, so please get in touch and let me know! See you next issue.

Sally

**Sally FitzGerald** Senior Editor



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Haunted house  
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### Subscribe

Turn to page 46 to take advantage of our very special offer to subscribe to *Food Heaven* and receive three issues for £3!



**STAR BUY**



### BAKING SECRETS

Discover 25 top tips for baking perfect cupcakes on page 22. You'll never have a cupcake fail again!



### NEW TREND

### MUG CAKES

Made in the microwave in under 5 minutes, these are the perfect treat in a hurry – try them on page 49.



### Q&A

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### CUPCAKE WARS

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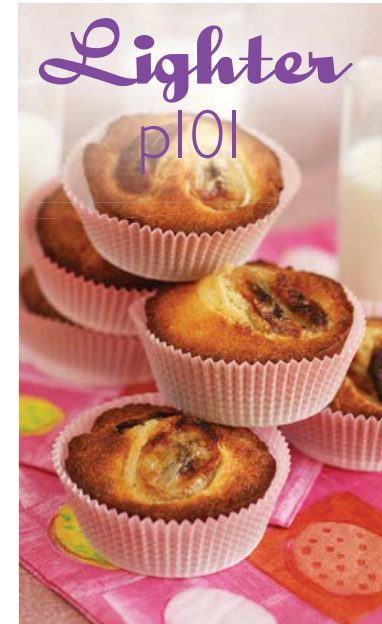
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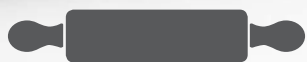
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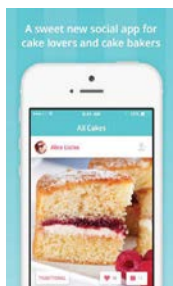
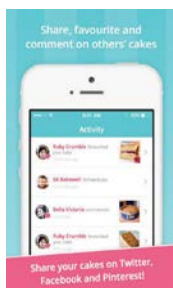
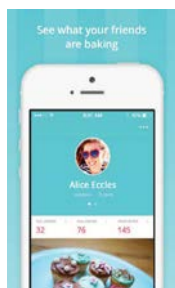
# Fresh from the oven...

Discover the latest news from the world of cupcakes and baking – including new products, tutorials, shows and more...

**NEW  
FEATURE**

## Share your bakes with the world

Love sharing photos of your latest bakes online? Check out the new Cake Club app – the ultimate social networking experience. Available from the App Store and also as a website for all other smart phones, the App allows users to find ideas, inspiration and to share their great baking creations. This has been built by cake lovers for cake lovers. Through the Cake Club you can share your bakes with the world, compile a library of your favourites, discover, follow and chat to fellow cake makers, and comment on the bakes you love. Cake Club was started in 2014 by passionate baker and mother of 7, Karen Lonergan. Karen says “I’ve noticed over time that baking has had a revival and it seems more people than ever are taking photos and proudly showing off their cake creations. I bake a lot, and had become frustrated that there wasn’t an easier way to discover different baking and cake decorating ideas. I found myself on many different sites looking for inspiration and thought a one stop shop for busy people, on the go, would be great. And so Cake Club was baked!” Cake Club is available to download on the App Store FREE. Cake Club is designed for iPhone, iPad and iPod touch. Cake Club requires OS 7.1 or more recent. Find Cake Club in the iTunes store, or visit online at [www.cakeclub.me/app](http://www.cakeclub.me/app)



## Churned to perfection

Never let leftover cream go to waste again – now you can make your own delicious butter for your baking with the help of Kilner's new butter churner. Turning cream into butter takes a matter of minutes with this quirky gadget, and you can also flavour your butter to give it a unique twist – cinnamon butter works particularly well melted over toasted teacakes! A Kilner Butter Churning Set complete with butter churner, wooden shaping paddle and glass butter dish is available for £32.49 from [silvermushroom.com](http://silvermushroom.com)



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## Sift in style

A sifter is an essential tool in every baker's kitchen, but Tala has now shown they can be attractive too! The Tala Triple Sifter is designed for the 21st century kitchen, but based on the best-selling 1950s model in a choice of two pastel colours, powder blue and green. The sifter features three interchangeable stainless steel meshes – choose from 'fine', 'medium' or 'coarse' depending on your task. Simply place the 7in mesh into the enamelled body, and the colander-style high-sided sifter will stop you from giving yourself a dusting of flour or icing sugar! The fine mesh ensures feathery light flour for your bakes, and perfectly distributed icing sugar or cocoa powder. The Tala Originals Triple Sifter costs just £19.99, find out more at [www.talacooking.com](http://www.talacooking.com)





## Learn cake decorating in the comfort of your own home

A few years ago Cake Craft World launched a series of cake decorating videos on YouTube. After many hours in the studio and millions of hits, they have been inspired to create The Cake Craft World Club, an online cake decorating school. Now everyone from the beginner to the professional can enjoy watching the Cake Craft World team of experts sharing their knowledge through hundreds of cake decorating tutorials, at just £5.95 per month. As an additional incentive, members get a 15% discount on new products and a 10% discount on all other items available in the online store. You can join the Cake Craft World Club at [www.cakecraftworld.co.uk](http://www.cakecraftworld.co.uk)



## Beautiful bunting

Clever Little Cake Kits aims to take the stress out of decorating your cakes and cupcakes, and we particularly love this new range of bunting toppers. In 18 different colourways and 6 patterns (flowers, hearts, stars, stripes, polka dots, Union Jack flags and pirate bunting), they can be personalized with white letters or numbers. The best thing about the bunting is that all you need to create it is a simple pair of scissors! 60 flags are enough for 20 cupcakes from £6.50, or buy 90 flags, enough for 60 cupcakes, for £10. For details, visit [cleverlittlecakekits.co.uk](http://cleverlittlecakekits.co.uk). Cupcake Heaven readers can also get an exclusive 10% off online orders – just enter discount code HEAVEN at the checkout.



## Get your tickets for Cake International!

The world's largest cake decorating show celebrates the end of its 21st anniversary year at the NEC, Birmingham from 6-8 November 2015. The event will be opened by chocolatier extraordinaire Will Torrent and will feature life-size cake and sugarcraft characters such as Maleficent, the newest creation from Emma Jayne, and the 40th anniversary celebration of the Rocky Horror Sugar Show. A host of workshops and taster sessions will also be available throughout the show and visitors are invited to roll up their sleeves and have a go. The experts from The Renshaw School will run regular workshops on cake decorating techniques, while the Taste of Sugarcraft mini workshops are the perfect place to brush up on skills under the expert eye of Ann Park from the British Sugarcraft Guild. Plus, of course, with 150 exhibitors there will be plenty of chances to shop for new cupcake making supplies. For full details of all the features, workshops, exhibitors and guests at this year's show, visit [www.cakeinternational.co.uk](http://www.cakeinternational.co.uk)

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## Keep it clean

As bakers, our oven is arguably our most important tool, and if you don't want to spend hours endlessly cleaning it, check out the oven shields and cleaner from Jaime. Made from natural resources, the oven door and floor shields line the relevant areas to help keep your oven clean. The shields themselves are easily cleaned and dishwasher safe, and heat resistant to 220°C. The Oven Door Shield remains transparent, so still allows visibility of cooking through any conventional glass oven door, it is suitable for all 50cm and 60cm single and double ovens, and in addition can be used for all range-cookers. Floor shields are priced at £9.50, while oven door shields cost £15, plus a Magic Oven Cleaner is available at £7.50 to clean the grime and dirt off your oven without the need to scrub. Find out more details online by visiting [www.ovendoorshield.co.uk](http://www.ovendoorshield.co.uk)

## Iced Jems opens Midlands store

Iced Jems, the popular online shop for baking and party goodies and equipment, has now opened its first physical shop. Packed with baking goodies, partyware and gifts, there is also a kitchen where owner Gemma will be holding classes along with other visiting teachers. If you'd like to check it out, the address is Iced Jems, Dudley Road, West Midlands DY9 8DU. If you're not in the area, you can still buy supplies online at [www.icedjems.com](http://www.icedjems.com)

**NEW SHOP ALERT!**







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# Occasions

CUPCAKES

HALLOWEEN





## Zombie cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

110g (4oz) butter

75g (2½oz) caster sugar

2 tbsp light brown sugar

2 free-range eggs

150g (5oz) plain flour

1 tsp baking powder

25g (1oz) cocoa powder

120ml (4fl oz) milk

75g (2½oz) chocolate chips

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

140g (5oz) unsalted butter

280g (10oz) icing sugar

1-2 tbsp strong black coffee

### TO DECORATE

200-300g (7-11oz) green gumpaste

brown liquid food colouring

150g (5oz) grated plain chocolate, chopped

4-5 chocolate biscuits, crushed to crumbs  
sugar tombstones

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Place 12 paper cases in a bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter in a mixing bowl until soft and light. Beat in both sugars and beat until light and fluffy.
- 3 Beat in the eggs, one at a time, until well blended. Sift in the flour, baking powder and cocoa and fold in gently until incorporated. Stir in the milk and chocolate chips.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until risen and firm to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the buttercream, beat the butter until soft. Sift in the icing sugar and beat well until smooth and creamy. Beat in the coffee until smooth.
- 6 Spread the buttercream over the top of the cakes.
- 7 Press pieces of gumpaste into a 'ghoulish hand' silicone mould or form into a hand shape yourself. Leave to dry.
- 8 Using a fine brush, paint brown streaks on the hands, as in the photo. Leave to dry.
- 9 Mix together the grated chocolate and crumbs and sprinkle over the buttercream.
- 10 Insert a hand and a tombstone into each cake.





Recipe and photography p 12-13 © Stockfood

## Red rose and skull cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**100g (3½oz) grated plain chocolate**

**100g (3½oz) butter**

**75g (2½oz) sugar**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

**a pinch of salt**

**1 free-range egg**

**200g (7oz) plain flour**

**1 tsp baking powder**

**½ tsp bicarbonate of soda**

**1 tbsp cocoa powder**

**100ml (3½fl oz) milk**

### TO DECORATE

**red paper roses**

**300-400g (11-14oz) white sugarpaste**

**black liquid food colouring or piping gel**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line two 12-hole mini muffin tins with paper cases.
- 2** Beat together the chocolate and butter in a mixing bowl until soft and creamy.
- 3** Gradually beat in the sugar, vanilla and salt until smooth.
- 4** Beat in the egg until incorporated. Gradually sift in the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and cocoa and fold in gently, alternating with the milk, until well blended.
- 5** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 15 minutes, until springy to the touch. Cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6** Place a paper rose on each cake. Alternatively, form the rose petals from red sugarpaste to make the cupcakes fully edible.
- 7** Roll the sugarpaste into 24 smooth balls. Flatten slightly and mould into skull shapes. Place in the centre of the cakes.
- 8** With a fine brush, paint details in black food colouring or piping gel, as in the photo, on the skulls and leave to dry.



## Mint-chocolate witch cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

200g (7oz) plain flour

25g (1oz) cocoa powder

1 tbsp baking powder

110g (4oz) sugar

2 free-range eggs

100ml (3½fl oz) sunflower oil

225ml (8fl oz) milk

75g (2½oz) chocolate chips

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

175g (6oz) white chocolate

225g (8oz) unsalted butter

300g (11oz) icing sugar, more if needed

a pinch of salt

55ml (2fl oz) double cream

½ tsp peppermint extract

green food colouring paste

### TO DECORATE

12 ice cream cones

24 flat liquorice sweets

thin liquorice strips

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Sift the flour, cocoa and baking powder into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar. Whisk together the eggs and oil until frothy, then slowly whisk in the milk. Stir into the dry ingredients until just blended. The mixture will be slightly lumpy. Gently stir in the chocolate chips.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the tins for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the buttercream, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Set aside to cool.
- 5 Beat the butter until very soft. Sift in the icing sugar and salt and beat until smooth.
- 6 Whisk in the cream and peppermint extract until blended. Stir in the cooled chocolate and a little food colouring, beating well until smooth. The mixture should be stiff enough to spread. Beat in more icing sugar if necessary.
- 7 Spread the buttercream on the cakes. Place an ice cream cone on each cake and arrange liquorice strips on either side of the cones for the hair.
- 8 Add the sweets for the eyes and smaller strips of liquorice for the noses and mouths.







## Pumpkin walnut cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

225g (8oz) plain flour  
2 tsp baking powder  
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
¼ tsp salt  
400g (14oz) tinned pumpkin purée  
80g (3oz) butter, melted  
120ml (4fl oz) evaporated milk

175g (6oz) light brown sugar  
2 free-range eggs, beaten  
50g (1½oz) chopped walnuts

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

225g (8oz) unsalted butter  
250g (9oz) icing sugar  
2 tbsp light brown sugar  
2 tbsp maple syrup

### TO DECORATE

chopped toasted walnuts

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Sift the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, cinnamon and salt into a mixing bowl.
- 3 Whisk together the pumpkin purée, melted butter, evaporated milk, sugar and eggs until blended.
- 4 Stir the wet mixture into the dry ingredients until just combined. Stir in the walnuts.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the buttercream, beat the butter until soft and creamy. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth.
- 7 Beat in the brown sugar and maple syrup until blended.
- 8 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on each cake. Sprinkle with toasted walnuts.



## Spider cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

12 basic vanilla cupcakes (see page 112)

### FOR THE TOPPING

225ml (8fl oz) double cream  
350g (12oz) plain chocolate, chopped  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
cocoa powder  
20-30 thin liquorice strips, each cut into 4 pieces  
chocolate sugar strands  
150g (5oz) orange sugarpaste  
icing sugar  
40 small liquorice sweets  
edible glue  
a tube of orange piping icing

- 1 Bake 12 cupcakes and leave them to cool.
- 2 Heat the cream in a pan and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and add the chocolate. Leave to stand for 5 minutes, then stir in the vanilla and stir until the mixture is smooth. Pour into a bowl.
- 3 Allow to cool, then cover and chill for about 3 hours until firm.
- 4 Dust your hands with cocoa powder. Take spoonfuls of the mixture and roll into small balls. Roll the balls in the chocolate strands to coat. Cut each ball in half and place one half on top of each cupcake. Insert eight liquorice strips into each, as in the photo, and chill to firm up.
- 5 Roll out the sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out 40 small discs and attach the liquorice sweets with a dab of edible glue. Pipe a dot of piping icing on each disc for the eyes.
- 6 Attach the discs to the cakes with a dab of edible glue if necessary.





Recipes p16-19 © Stockfood, photography © iStock Photo

## Autumn leaf cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**200g (7oz) plain flour**

**2½ tsp baking powder**

**110g (4oz) sugar**

**125g (4½oz) chopped walnuts**

**180ml (6fl oz) milk**

**80ml (3fl oz) sunflower oil**

**1 free-range egg**

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

**110g (4oz) unsalted butter**

**225g (8oz) icing sugar**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

### TO DECORATE

**400g (14oz) white sugarpaste**

**paste food colourings – green, orange, red and yellow**

**liquid food colourings – green, orange, red and yellow**

**icing sugar**

**small coloured sweets**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Mix the flour, baking powder and sugar in a mixing bowl.
- 3** Mix together the milk, oil and egg. Stir into the dry ingredients with the walnuts. Stir until just combined. The mixture will be lumpy.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until golden brown and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** For the buttercream, beat the butter until very soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar, beating until smooth. Beat in the vanilla.
- 6** Spoon into a piping bag and pipe swirls on the cakes.
- 7** To decorate, divide the sugarpaste into four portions and knead food colouring paste into each portion.
- 8** Roll out the sugarpastes separately on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out leaf shapes using embossed cookie cutters or your own card templates.
- 9** Using a fine brush and liquid colouring, paint the leaf details in a contrasting colour on the leaves. Leave to dry.
- 10** Arrange the leaves on the buttercream-topped cakes and decorate with sweets.



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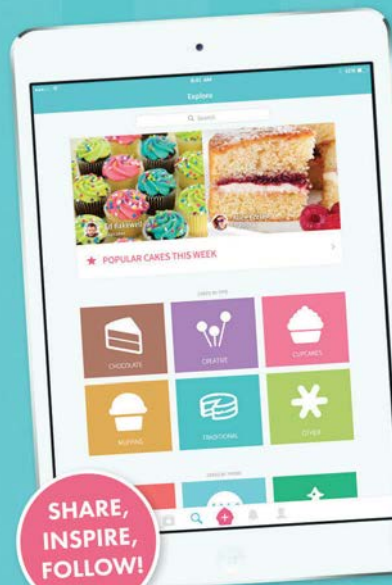
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## Pumpkin cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 110g (4oz) butter
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- 110g (4oz) self-raising flour
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 75g (2 ½ oz) white chocolate chips

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 300ml (11 fl oz) double cream
- 1-2 tbsp icing sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- TO DECORATE**
- grated plain chocolate
- sugarpaste tombstones
- sugarpaste pumpkins
- 100-150g (3½-5oz) green sugarpaste
- icing sugar

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with cupcake cases.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs until well blended.
- 3 Sift in the flour and fold in gently with the vanilla and chocolate chips, until just combined.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack and leave to cool completely.
- 5 For the topping, whisk together all the ingredients until thick.
- 6 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe swirls on top of the cakes.
- 7 Sprinkle with grated chocolate and place a sugarpaste tombstone and a pumpkin on each cake.
- 8 Roll out the green sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut into thin strips and arrange on the cakes, as in the photo.



## Horror Halloween cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 100ml (3½ fl oz) sunflower oil
- 90g (3oz) caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs
- 180g (6oz) plain flour
- ¾ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 125g (4½ oz) raspberries

### FOR THE ICING

- 200g (7oz) icing sugar
- water

### TO DECORATE

- strawberry sauce
- knife shaped biscuits

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Whisk together the oil, sugar and eggs in a mixing bowl until smooth. Sift in the flour and bicarbonate of soda and gently fold into the mixture until blended. Stir in the raspberries until blended.
- 3 Pour into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until risen and firm to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl. Beat in just enough water to make a smooth, thick icing.
- 5 Spoon a little icing on each cake and leave to set.
- 6 Spoon a little strawberry sauce on each cake and insert a biscuit.

**TIP** If you don't want to bake biscuits, form the knives from sugarpaste.





## Witch cupcakes

Makes 9

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**100g (3½oz) butter**  
**75g (2½oz) caster sugar**  
**½ tsp coconut essence**  
**1 free-range egg**  
**80g (3oz) self-raising flour**  
**25g (1oz) desiccated coconut**  
**50ml (1¾fl oz) milk**

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

**60g (2oz) unsalted butter**  
**120g (4oz) icing sugar**  
**1 tbsp cream**  
**pink food colouring**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**150g (5oz) white chocolate**  
**250g (9oz) icing sugar**  
**80g (3oz) unsalted butter**  
**25ml (1fl oz) cream**  
**lilac food colouring paste**

### TO DECORATE

**black, white and purple sugarpaste**

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in 9 holes of a muffin tin.
- 2 Beat together the butter, sugar and coconut essence in a mixing bowl until pale and creamy. Beat in the egg.
- 3 Stir together the flour and coconut, then stir into the butter mixture alternately with the milk. Mix until just combined.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the buttercream, beat the butter until very soft. Gradually beat in the icing sugar until smooth.
- 6 Beat in the cream and food colouring until blended.
- 7 Spread on top of the cakes.
- 8 For the lilac topping, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly.
- 9 Beat the butter and icing sugar until fluffy and pale, then beat in the cream, melted chocolate and food colouring paste until smooth. Chill until firm enough to pipe.
- 10 Spoon into a piping bag and, using a circular motion, pipe a tight spiral, forming the centre of a rose shape. Keep piping in an outwards spiral, lessening pressure as you come to the end.
- 11 To decorate, start with the witch's hat. Form some black sugarpaste into a cone shape. Take another small piece of black paste and roll out. Cut out a circle for the brim. Attach the cone to the brim with water.
- 12 For the legs, roll two thick sausages of white sugarpaste and flatten at the ends. Create two flat ovals of purple paste for the shoes, then add two tringles for the heels. Stick each shoe to the end of a leg. Position the legs and hat on the cupcake as shown in the photo, then repeat for the remaining cupcakes.





## Haunted house cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**12 cupcakes of your choice (see recipe on page 112)**

### TO DECORATE

**buttercream (see recipe on page 112)**

**grey or black food colouring**

**white modelling paste**

**orange modelling paste**

**black modelling paste**

**haunted house and ghost silicone mould (available to buy online)**

**black sugar sprinkles**

**black and white straws, cut in half**

**black edible ink pen**

- 1** You need to make the decorations at least a day before baking your cupcakes, to give them time to harden slightly. Using a silicone haunted house and ghost mould, take a very small piece of black modelling paste and manipulate until softened. Press into the witch shape flying across the moon. Remove any excess paste, so the witch is the only area covered.
- 2** Soften a larger piece of black modelling paste and press into the haunted house area, making sure you get the paste into all the detailed areas. Remove any excess paste so the back of the paste is flush with the edge of the mould.
- 3** Finally, it's time to add the moon. Soften some orange modelling paste and press into the moon section of the mould. Remove the excess paste from the back to neaten.
- 4** Now make the ghosts, using the same method and mould, but using white modelling paste. Using modelling paste helps the decorations to become firmer than if you used sugarpaste.
- 5** Carefully remove the ghosts and the haunted house from the mould and set aside to harden overnight. Repeat to make enough decorations for all 12 cupcakes.
- 6** The next day, bake your favourite cupcakes in a flavour of your choice, following the instructions on page 112. Leave to cool.
- 7** Make a batch of buttercream using the recipe on page 112, but colour with a little black or grey food colouring to achieve your required shade. Depending on how high you'd like your buttercream mounds to be, you might need two quantities. Chill.
- 8** Once your cupcakes are cold, transfer the buttercream to a piping bag fitted with a small closed star nozzle. This will give you the crisp lines and edges. Pipe the buttercream in rounds on the cupcake, as if you were piping several roses on top of each other; tilting the nozzle at a slight angle occasionally to create the ruffle effect. Make the buttercream mound reach your desired height.
- 9** Finish off your ghosts by drawing on the eyes and mouths with a black edible ink pen. Leave to dry slightly.
- 10** All that's left to do is to position the haunted house, ghosts and straws in place on your cupcakes. Finish with a sprinkling of black sugar sprinkles around the base of your buttercream swirls and your creations are complete!



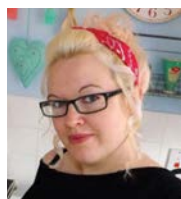






# 25 top tips for cupcake success!

Baking is a science and getting the right results requires a methodical approach. With these top tips you're guaranteed to succeed.



Feature by Sarah Sibley from Bake With Sarah [www.bakewithsarah.com](http://www.bakewithsarah.com)

## 1 USE GOOD QUALITY INGREDIENTS

Using good quality ingredients can make a big difference to your cupcakes. Always opt for flavour extracts rather than using synthetic flavourings, which can give your cupcakes a nasty artificial taste.

## 2 CHECK THE DATE

Although raising agents such as baking powder have a long shelf life, they have very limited shelf lives once opened. When they have been opened for 3 months they will start to lose their effectiveness and should be thrown away.

## 3 ALWAYS READ THE RECIPE

Always make sure you have read the recipe properly before starting. There is nothing worse than getting half way through and realising you've forgotten to buy a key ingredient!

## 4 STAY ORGANISED AND TIDY

Use as few bowls and utensils as possible and try and clear up as you go. You don't want to take a hot tray

of cupcakes out of the oven and have nowhere to put them.

## 5 BRING INGREDIENTS TO ROOM TEMPERATURE

Eggs, milk, butter and other refrigerated ingredients should be brought to room temperature before use, as they don't combine as smoothly with the dry ingredients when chilled.

*By over mixing your batter you can end up removing too many of the air bubbles, resulting in hollow tunnels.*

## 6 PREHEAT THE OVEN

Always turn your oven on before you start to make your batter; otherwise it won't have had time to reach the proper temperature and your baking times will be off.

## 7 KNOW YOUR OWN OVEN

All ovens work slightly differently and most people get to know the quirks of their own. So if you know that when you're cooking dinner you usually have to set the temperature slightly higher or leave it in for slightly longer than it tells you to on the packet, make the same amendments to your cupcake recipe instructions.

## 8 WEIGH INGREDIENTS PROPERLY

It is important to weigh ingredients as accurately as possible to ensure that they turn out the way they should. Adding too much or too little of something can alter the taste and texture of a cupcake.

## 9 ADD INGREDIENTS GRADUALLY

Add ingredients bit by bit, mixing between each addition rather than dumping everything in together.

## 10 DON'T OVER MIX THE BATTER

By over mixing your batter, you can





end up removing too many of the air bubbles. This can result in hollow tunnels forming inside your cupcakes, and a cracked, volcano-like top. Cupcake batter should only be beaten until the ingredients have combined and no more.

## 11 START AND FINISH WITH DRY INGREDIENTS

When combining dry and liquid ingredients, start and end with the dry ingredients, as it helps to get the batter to the right consistency.

## 12 DON'T OVER OR UNDER FILL YOUR CUPCAKE CASES

You should fill the cases half to two-thirds full. Any more and they will rise above the top and look messy, any less and they won't reach the top and look too small.

## 13 USE A SCOOP TO FILL CUPCAKE LINERS

To achieve uniform cupcakes it is important to make sure you are putting the same amount of batter in each case. The best way to do this is by using a large ice-cream scoop.

## 14 BAKE IN THE CENTRE OF YOUR OVEN

Always bake cupcakes one tray at a time in the centre of your oven. This will ensure good airflow and even heat distribution, preventing overcooking on one side. If your oven cooks unevenly from front to back, (this can often be the case with gas ovens) rotate the tray of cupcakes two-thirds of the way through baking.

## 15 DON'T OPEN THE DOOR!

Never be tempted to open the oven door for a peek at your cupcakes until you're at least two-thirds of the way through the baking time. Doing so

may well cause your cupcakes to sink in the middle.

## 16 ARE THEY DONE?

Cupcakes are done when they are a golden colour and they bounce back if you apply some light pressure with your finger.

## 17 DON'T LEAVE BAKED CUPCAKES IN THE TRAY

Cupcakes should always be removed from the baking tray and transferred to a wire rack immediately after they come out of the oven. The heat from the still hot tray can cause the cupcakes to overcook, and can also make the cases peel.

*When combining dry and liquid ingredients, start and end with the dry ingredients, as it helps to get the batter to the right consistency.*

## 18 QUICKER COOLING

Place a mug underneath each end of the cooling rack to allow air to pass underneath the cupcakes. This will help them to cool quicker.

## 19 NEVER FROST A WARM CUPCAKE

As impatient as you may be, never try and frost a cupcake until it is completely cool. If the cupcakes are still warm you can end up with soggy sponge and melted frosting.

## 20 THE TASTE TEST

If you are unsure whether your frosting is sufficiently mixed, taste it. If it has a grainy texture to it, keep mixing.

## 21 USE A GLASS

When filling a piping bag, place the bag into a glass and fold the top of it down over the sides. You will then be able to spoon the frosting in without making a mess.

## 22 FROST TO THE EDGE

Always try and cover the entire top of the cupcake, piping or spreading the frosting right to the very edges. The frosting will then act as a seal, locking in the sponge's moisture and keeping it fresher for longer.

## 23 MAKE TOPPERS AHEAD OF TIME

If you are decorating your cupcakes with fondant toppers, make them a few hours or even a day ahead of the cupcakes. This will allow them time to dry hard, so they don't flop and lose their shape when they are added to the top of the cupcakes.

## 24 STORE THEM CORRECTLY

When cupcakes have cooled completely, store them in an airtight cardboard box. Never leave them for any length of time in a metal or Tupperware container, as they can make the cupcakes sweat and cause the wrappers to peel. Cardboard will soak up any excess moisture, preventing the wrappers from doing so. Cupcakes containing fresh cream or soft cheese should always be kept refrigerated.

## 25 EAT THEM QUICKLY!

Although some cupcakes will keep for a few days, cupcakes should ideally be eaten within 48 hours for optimum freshness.





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# Cupcake

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# Fun & Fancy

CUPCAKES





## Jax's bubblegum cupcakes

By Jeff Martin

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**115g (4oz) double cream**

**575g (1lb 4oz) plain flour**

**1 tbsp baking powder**

**½ tsp sea salt**

**230ml (8fl oz) whole milk**

**1 tsp pure vanilla extract**

**3 large free-range egg whites, at room temperature**

**115g (4oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature**

**450g (1lb) granulated sugar**

**2 tbsp bubblegum extract**

### FOR THE BUBBLEGUM FROSTING

**230g (8oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature**

**230g (8oz) cream cheese, at room temperature**

**about 1kg (2lb 2oz) icing sugar, divided**

**3 tbsp double cream**

**2 tsp pure vanilla extract**

**3 tbsp bubblegum extract**

**12 colourful gum balls, to garnish**

- 1** To make the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper cupcake liners.
- 2** Chill a medium bowl in the freezer for 5 minutes. Using a hand mixer, beat the cream in the chilled bowl until soft peaks form. Refrigerate until ready to use.
- 3** In a medium bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside. In a separate medium bowl, whisk together the milk, vanilla and egg whites.
- 4** In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream together the butter and granulated sugar on medium speed until very creamy, about 5 minutes. With the mixer running on medium speed, alternate between adding the flour mixture and the milk mixture. Blend until well incorporated. Add the bubblegum extract and mix well, then continue mixing on medium for 2 minutes more. Using a rubber spatula, gently fold the whipped cream into the cake batter.
- 5** Fill each liner two-thirds full of batter. Bake for 15-16 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the centre of a cupcake comes out clean. Let cool completely on a wire rack before frosting.
- 6** For the frosting, in a large bowl using a hand mixer, beat together the butter and cream cheese until creamy. Slowly add the icing sugar, 230g (8oz) at a time. After 2-3 additions of icing sugar, add the double cream, vanilla and bubblegum extract. Add the remaining icing sugar and beat for 5 minutes more, until light and fluffy.
- 7** Put the frosting in a pastry bag fitted with a plain tip and pipe a swirl onto each cake. Top each with a colourful gum ball. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to three days.



# Orange creamsicle cupcakes

By Jeff Martin

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

450g (1lb) plain flour

¼ tsp baking powder

¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda

¼ tsp salt

115g (4oz) butter, at room temperature

230g (8oz) granulated sugar

1½ tbsp finely grated orange zest (from about 1½ oranges)

2 large free-range eggs

170ml (6fl oz) double cream

55ml (2fl oz) orange juice, freshly squeezed

1½ tsp orange extract

1 tsp pure vanilla extract

## FOR THE ORANGE BUTTERCREAM

700g (1lb 8oz) icing sugar

230g (8oz) unsalted butter

1 tsp pure vanilla extract

1-2 tbsp double cream

1 tbsp orange extract

¼ tsp orange food colouring

12 thin orange slices,  
to garnish

1 To make the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper cupcake liners.

2 In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Set aside.

3 In another bowl, using a hand mixer, blend the butter, sugar and zest on medium-high speed until pale and fluffy, about 3-4 minutes. Mix in the eggs, one at a time, blending well after each addition.

4 Measure the cream into a liquid measuring cup and stir in the orange juice, orange extract and vanilla extract. With a hand mixer on low speed, work in three separate batches, blending in the flour mixture alternating with the cream mixture. Be sure to begin and end with the flour mixture. Mix just until combined after each addition.

5 Fill each cup three-quarters full of batter. Bake for 23-25 minutes, rotating the muffin tin once halfway through baking, until a toothpick inserted into the centre of a cupcake comes out clean. Let cool several minutes before transferring to a wire rack. Let cool completely before frosting.

6 To make the orange buttercream, in a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, mix together the icing sugar and butter. Mix on low speed until well blended and then increase the speed to medium and beat for another 3 minutes.

7 Add the vanilla, cream, orange extract and orange food colouring and continue to beat on medium speed for 1 minute more, adding more cream for the desired consistency if needed.

8 Transfer the frosting to a pastry bag fitted with a plain tip and pipe a swirl of frosting on top of each cupcake. Garnish with a small orange slice just before serving. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to three days.



The recipes on pages 26-28 are taken from *Buttercream Dreams* by Jeff Martin. Photography © Jenny Wheat. Published by Andrews McMeel Publishing. RRP £9.90.



## Strawberry lemonade cupcakes in jars

By Jeff Martin

Makes 24 jars

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 290g (10oz) plain flour**
- 1¼ tsp baking powder**
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- ½ tsp salt**
- 2 large free-range eggs**
- 170g (6oz) granulated sugar**
- ½ tsp pure vanilla extract**
- 1 tsp pure lemon extract**
- 1 tsp finely grated lemon zest**
- 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice**
- 115ml (4fl oz) vegetable, canola or extra-light olive oil**
- 115ml (4fl oz) sour cream**

### FOR THE FROSTING

- 115g (4oz) unsalted butter**
- 115g (4oz) cream cheese**
- 900g (2lb) icing sugar**
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract**
- 2-3 tbsp strawberry jam**
- 1 tbsp double cream or whole milk, as needed**
- 4-6 fresh strawberries, hulled and sliced, to garnish**

- 1** To make the lemon cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line two 12-cup muffin tins with paper cupcake liners.
- 2** In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Set aside.

- 3** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the eggs for 10-20 seconds. Add the granulated sugar and beat on medium speed for about 30 seconds more. Add the vanilla, lemon extract, lemon zest, lemon juice and oil and beat until smooth. Add the sour cream and blend until combined. Reduce the mixer speed to low and slowly add the flour mixture. Mix just until the dry ingredients are incorporated.
- 4** Fill the cupcake liners about two-thirds full with the batter. Bake for 12-15 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the centre of a cupcake comes out clean. Let cool completely before frosting.
- 5** To make the strawberry frosting, in a large bowl using a hand mixer, beat the butter until completely smooth. Add the cream cheese and beat until fully incorporated and very smooth.
- 6** With the mixer running on low speed, add the icing sugar, one cup at a time. Add the vanilla and strawberry jam and beat until well combined. If the frosting is very thick, add a little bit of the double cream, then beat until light and fluffy.
- 7** To assemble the jars, remove the liners from the cooled cakes and then slice each in half horizontally. Place the bottom half of a cupcake in each jar. Transfer the frosting to a pastry bag fitted with a plain tip and pipe a layer of frosting in each of the 24 mason jars. Then place the top of a cupcake on top of each one and finish with a layer of frosting. Garnish with fresh strawberries, as desired. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week.





## Bug cupcakes

By Renshaw ([www.renshawbaking.com](http://www.renshawbaking.com))

Makes 20

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**20 vanilla cupcakes (see the recipe on page 112)**

**250g (9oz) each of Ready to Roll Icing in White, Pink, Turquoise, Black and Green**

**150g (5½oz) buttercream**

**boiled water**

**40 'shoelace' sweets**

### EQUIPMENT

**rolling pin**

**palette knife**

**plastic ribbon cutters**

**pointed tool**

**smiley face tool**

**small brush**

- 1** Fill the cupcake cases just over a third full with cake mix, you want them to dome slightly when baked.
- 2** Bake them as per the recipe and allow to cool on a wire rack.
- 3** Once completely cool, slice off the top to give you a small dome.
- 4** Knead the ready to roll icing on a clean, dry surface until pliable. Dust the surface with a little icing sugar if required. Roll out each coloured icing to your desired thickness.
- 5** Mask the top of the cupcake with a thin layer of buttercream.
- 6** Use the circle cutters to cut the discs of icing to the desired size and place over the top of the dome.
- 7** Roll small balls of icing and divide into two equal sized balls. This makes sure that each decoration is of equal size. Distribute evenly over each side of the dome. These will form the wing decoration.
- 8** Take a knife and cut three-quarters of the way through the centre of the dome. Pull apart and place on top of the cupcake, leaving an exposed gap in the centre.
- 9** Roll a small ball of icing to form the head.
- 10** Using the pointed tool, form two small holes on the head for the antenna to go in.
- 11** Cut two even pieces of 'shoelace' sweets, then wet the ends with boiled water and insert into the antenna holes.
- 12** Use the smiley face tool (or half a straw) to create the mouth.
- 13** Take a piece of white icing and divide into two even pieces and roll into balls.
- 14** Take a smaller piece of black icing and do the same. These will form the pupils.
- 15** Press the black balls into the white balls to form the eyes.
- 16** Brush the bases of the eyes with boiled water and press them onto the head.
- 17** Brush the base of the head and place on the uncut part of the cut dome as illustrated.
- 18** Finally, roll a small sausage of icing into a point to form the tail.

Recipe and photography by Renshaw ([www.renshawbaking.com](http://www.renshawbaking.com))



## Hydrangea cupcakes

By Cake Craft World ([www.cakecraftworld.co.uk](http://www.cakecraftworld.co.uk))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**12 basic vanilla cupcakes (see page 112), baked in blue and purple cases**

### TO DECORATE

**buttercream**

**cornflour pouch**

**white, powder blue and blush pink Sattina sugarpaste**

**selection of blossom colouring tints or Dinkydoodle airbrush and colours**

### EQUIPMENT

**Karen Davies hydrangea cupcake mould**

- 1** Bake your cupcakes in complementary colour cases, such as blue, lilac or mauve, then prepare the cupcakes for decorating. If they have domed slightly while baking, cut level with a sharp knife, then spread with a layer of buttercream or your favourite topping. Unless you are going to airbrush your cupcakes, start with a pastel coloured sugarpaste, maybe pale pink or blue, and knead the sugarpaste well so that it is soft and pliable. Dust the mould lightly with cornflour, then turn the mould over so any excess cornflour falls out.
- 2** Roll the sugarpaste into a ball before pressing it firmly into the mould, making sure every crevice of the mould is filled. It's more than likely that you will have too much sugarpaste, so cut away any excess

with a flat palette knife. The easiest way to do this is by cutting from the middle outwards a few times, until the sugarpaste fits perfectly into the mould. Turn the mould over and peel it back, so that the decoration pops out, then lift it up with your palette knife and place on top of the buttercream on your cupcake.

- 3** To colour the hydrangeas you can use blossom tint dusts or an airbrush if you have one. What makes them look 'lifelike' is the use of different tones and shades, so however you decide to colour them, choose two or three colours that complement each other and build up colour in some areas more than others. Blossom tint dusts are easy to use. Pour a little of each colour onto some kitchen roll, then dip a soft brush into the colour and brush onto the icing. You can mix the colours together or overlay different colours on top of each other on the cupcake. If you are using an airbrush, overlay colours on top of each other and leave a few areas very pale to create depth.

**TIP** Colour three balls of sugarpaste in pale blue, lilac and pink, then knead together to create a marbling effect, before pressing into the mould. Use this method to cut down on colouring afterwards.





## Novelty wool hat cupcakes

By Rainbow Dust ([www.rainbowdust.co.uk](http://www.rainbowdust.co.uk))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

12 basic vanilla cupcakes  
(see page 112)

### TO DECORATE

apricot jam

white sugar strands

ProGel Food Colours in red,  
yellow, grey, pink, black,  
sunflower, lime green, ruby,  
aqua and baby blue

500g (1lb 1oz) white sugarpaste  
edible glue

- 1 Bake cupcakes according to your favourite recipe, or the one on page 112, and leave to cool before decorating.
- 2 Brush over each cake with warm apricot glaze. Roll and cut out circle shapes from white sugarpaste using a 65mm cutter, placing each shape on top of your cupcakes. Using each ProGel colour, add to small amounts of white sugarpaste. Cover until needed.
- 3 For the red and yellow hat, roll red sugarpaste into a cone shape using a smoother. Use yellow sugarpaste to roll out a sausage shape using a smoother. Secure the yellow sausage shape to the base of the hat with edible glue. Roll a pea-size ball of yellow, securing with edible glue on top of the hat, marking holes with a cel stick. Roll and cut out yellow star shapes and attach to the hat with edible glue.
- 4 For the yellow and pink hat, shape and mould yellow sugarpaste into an oblong, pinching out at the top with your finger and thumb at each side. This creates a tea bag shape effect to your hat. Using the pink sugarpaste, roll a thin sausage shape with a smoother, then roll and cut out two sizes of circle shapes and two small balls of

paste. Secure to the hat with edible glue. Mark lines around the base of the hat with a small palette knife, then cut into the bobbles with small scissors to create a fluffy effect.

- 5 For the aqua hat and sunflower hat, start by making a ball shape, keeping the bottom half flat. Attach a ball shape on each hat using ruby and lime green sugarpastes, pressing a cel stick all over into each. Roll out a sausage shape for each, flattening slightly with a smoother, and secure to the base of each hat. Mark lines on the main hat area and base with a veining tool for the sunflower hat. This is to create a knitted effect. Mark the aqua hat, by pressing a bone tool into the main part of the hat.
- 6 For the teddy bear and rabbit hats, roll each into a ball, texturing the teddy with a cel stick. Roll out a sausage shape in pink and baby blue sugarpastes using a smoother. Secure both with edible glue, texturing the pink trim with a cel stick. Make a small ball shape using the grey sugarpaste, cut into half and press into the centre with a bone tool. Brush the centres with glue and press a small ball of pink sugarpaste on top, pressing your bone tool again on top. Attach both ears on top of the hat with glue. Roll and cut out two white and black circles for the eyes. Make a pink circle for the mouth, marking a line with a small palette knife and smiley mouth tool, and a tiny ball of grey paste for the nose. Secure all shapes with glue. For the rabbit, make two cone shapes for the ears with baby blue paste, marking a line down the centre with a veining tool. Roll and cut out two white oval shapes, two white and black circles and two baby blue circles (marking holes with a cel stick) and a black tiny ball for the nose. Secure all with glue. Mark the mouth area with a bone tool. Finally, for the whiskers, use white sugar strands, pressing three into each side of the face.

Recipe and photography by Rainbow Dust Colours ([www.rainbowdust.co.uk](http://www.rainbowdust.co.uk))



## Banoffee bites

By Louise Blair

Makes 24 mini cupcakes

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**200g (7oz) brown rice flour**

**75g (3oz) butter, softened**

**75g (3oz) golden caster sugar**

**2 tsp gluten-free baking powder**

**1 large banana, mashed**

**2 free-range eggs**

**6 toffees, chopped**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**15g (½oz) chewy banana slices or dried banana chips**

**1 tbsp light muscovado sugar**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Line two 12-hole mini bun tins with paper cases. Place all the cake ingredients except the toffees in a food processor and whizz until smooth, or beat in a large bowl, then stir in the toffees.
- 2 Spoon the mixture into the paper cases, sprinkle over most of the muscovado sugar and place in the oven for 10-12 minutes until golden and just firm to the touch. Remove the cakes from the oven and cool on a wire rack. Top with chewy banana slices or banana chips and sprinkle with the remaining sugar, if wished.



The recipes on page 32 and the cherry crumble muffins on page 33 are taken from *Great Gluten-Free Baking* by Louise Blair, published by Octopus, RRP £12.99.



## Lavender cupcakes

By Louise Blair

Makes 12 cupcakes

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**1 tbsp milk**

**1 tsp lavender flowers (the small, individual flower heads, removed from the stalk)**

**125g (4oz) caster sugar**

**100g (3½oz) butter, softened**

**100g (3½oz) rice flour**

**1 tbsp chickpea/gram flour**

**2 free-range eggs, beaten**

**2 tbsp ground almonds**

**1 tsp gluten-free baking powder**

**1 tsp xanthan gum**

### TO DECORATE

**125g (4oz) icing sugar**

**12 small lavender heads**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 12-hole bun tin with paper cases. Place the milk and lavender in a ramekin, cover with clingfilm and microwave on full power for 10 seconds. Remove and leave for 10 minutes to allow the flavours to develop.
- 2 Place all the cake ingredients, including the lavender-infused milk, in a food processor and whizz until smooth, or beat in a large bowl.
- 3 Spoon the mixture into the paper cases and place in the oven for 12-15 minutes until golden and just firm to the touch. Remove the cakes from the oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool.
- 4 Add a few drops of water to the icing sugar – just enough to give a stiff icing. Smooth a little over each cupcake and decorate with a lavender head.





## Cherry crumble cupcakes

By Louise Blair

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 250g (8oz) brown rice flour**
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- 2 tsp gluten-free baking powder**
- 125g (4oz) golden caster sugar**
- 300g (10oz) tin of black cherries, drained**
- 75g (3oz) butter, melted**
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten**
- 150ml (¼ pint) buttermilk**

### FOR THE CRUMBLE

- 1 tbsp ground almonds**
- 1 tbsp soft light brown sugar**
- 1 tbsp brown rice flour**
- 1 tbsp butter**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a large 12-hole muffin tray with large muffin cases. Sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda and baking powder together in a large bowl, then stir in the sugar.
- 2** In a separate bowl, mix together the cherries, butter, eggs and buttermilk. Gently combine the dry and wet ingredients, then spoon the mixture into the muffin cases.
- 3** Quickly rub together the topping ingredients and sprinkle over the cupcake mixture, then place the muffins in the oven for 20 minutes until golden and risen. Remove the cupcakes from the oven and cool on a wire rack.



## Matcha tea cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 50ml (1¾ fl oz) milk**
- 2 tsp matcha powder**
- 75g (2½oz) caster sugar**
- 90g (3oz) butter**
- 2 free-range eggs**
- 125g (4½oz) self-raising flour**
- 50g (1¾oz) ground almonds**

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 115g (4oz) unsalted butter**
- 300g (1 lb) icing sugar**
- 2 tbsp cream**
- 2 tsp matcha powder, plus extra for sprinkling**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2** Heat the milk gently in a pan and when it starts to steam remove from the heat. Add the matcha powder and whisk well.
- 3** Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs until blended.
- 4** Sift in the flour and beat well. Stir in the ground almonds and matcha mixture until blended.
- 5** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6** For the buttercream, beat the butter until soft, then gradually sift in the icing sugar, beating well until blended. Beat in the cream and matcha powder until light and smooth. Spoon into a piping bag and pipe on top of the cakes. Sprinkle with a little matcha powder.

Recipe and photography © Stockfood



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

## Stripey cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**225g (8oz) self-raising flour**

**175g (6oz) caster sugar**

**finely grated zest of 2 unwaxed lemons**

**3 free-range eggs**

**100ml (3½ fl oz) plain yoghurt**

**175g (6oz) butter, melted**

**food colourings – pink, lilac, orange, blue, yellow and green**

### TO DECORATE

**400-500g (14-18oz) white sugarpaste**

**paste food colourings – pink, lilac, orange, blue,**

**yellow and green**

**cornflour**

**icing sugar**

### FOR THE ICING

**200g (7oz) icing sugar**

**hot water**

**a few drops of vanilla extract**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Mix together the flour, sugar and lemon zest in a mixing bowl.
- 3** Beat the eggs into the yoghurt, then stir into the dry ingredients with the melted butter. Mix together until smooth.
- 4** Divide the mixture into smaller bowls and stir a few drops of food colouring into each bowl.
- 5** Spoon each mixture alternately into the paper cases and swirl lightly with a cocktail stick or skewer.
- 6** Bake for 20-25 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7** To decorate, divide the sugarpaste into six equal portions and knead a food colouring into each portion.
- 8** With your hands, roll each portion into a long thin rope. Brush the edges of each rope with a little water.
- 9** Lay the ropes side by side on a surface dusted with cornflour and icing sugar and press the edges together so that they stick.
- 10** Roll very lightly with a rolling pin over the top to flatten slightly. Cut out 12 rounds with a cutter the same diameter as the cakes.
- 11** For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl and beat in enough hot water and the vanilla to make a thin, smooth icing.
- 12** Spread the icing on the cakes. Press the striped rounds on each cake before the icing sets and leave to set.





Recipe © Stockfood, photography © www.photocuisine.co.uk

## Cinnamon cheesecake cupcakes

*Makes 12*

### FOR THE BASE

**175g (6oz) ginger biscuit crumbs**  
**55g (2oz) unsalted butter, melted**

### FOR THE FILLING

**450g (16oz) cream cheese**  
**110g (4oz) sugar**  
**2 tbsp light brown sugar**  
**2 free-range eggs**  
**75ml (2½fl oz) double cream**  
**1 tsp vanilla extract**  
**1 tbsp ground cinnamon**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**350ml (12fl oz) double cream**  
**3 tbsp icing sugar**  
**2-3 tsp ground cinnamon, plus extra for sprinkling**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Grease a 12-hole mini cheesecake tin with removable bases. Place a baking dish of hot water in the bottom of the oven.
- 2** For the bases, mix together the biscuit crumbs and butter. Divide evenly into 12 and press into the bases of the tins.
- 3** For the filling, beat together the cream cheese and both sugars until smooth. Add the eggs, one at a time, fully incorporating each before adding the next. Stir in the cream, vanilla and cinnamon and mix until smooth. Pour into the tins.
- 4** Bake for 20-25 minutes, until the edges are set and the centre has a slight wobble. Turn off the oven and open the door. Cool the cakes in the oven for 5 minutes, then remove from the oven and place the tin on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** Remove the cakes from the tins.
- 6** For the topping, whisk the cream until thick, but not stiff. Sift in the icing sugar and cinnamon and whisk again.
- 7** Spoon into a piping bag and pipe on top of the cakes. Sprinkle with ground cinnamon.



## Raspberry mascarpone cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 250g (9oz) plain flour
- 50g (1½oz) ground almonds
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 2 free-range eggs
- 110g (4oz) sugar
- 80ml (3fl oz) sunflower oil
- 125ml (4½fl oz) soured cream

### FOR THE RASPBERRY SAUCE

- 250g (9oz) raspberries
- 4 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp orange juice
- 2 tbsp cornflour
- 200ml (7fl oz) cold water

### FOR THE MASCARPONE CREAM

- 175g (6oz) unsalted butter
- 350g (12oz) icing sugar
- 225g (8oz) mascarpone

### TO DECORATE

- 12 raspberries
- icing sugar

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Mix together the flour, ground almonds, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda in a bowl.
- 3 Whisk the eggs lightly in a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar, oil and soured cream and mix well.
- 4 Stir in the dry ingredients and stir until just combined.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the raspberry sauce, in a pan over a medium heat, combine the raspberries, sugar and orange juice.
- 7 In a small bowl, whisk the cornflour into the cold water until smooth. Pour the cornflour mixture into the pan and bring to a boil.
- 8 Reduce the heat and simmer for about 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until thickened. The sauce will continue to thicken as it cools.
- 9 Purée the sauce with a handheld blender. Strain the sauce through a fine strainer or sieve to remove the raspberry seeds.
- 10 For the mascarpone cream, beat the butter until soft, then sift in the sugar. Gradually beat in the mascarpone until smooth and creamy.
- 11 Carefully slice off the top of each cake.
- 12 Spoon the mascarpone cream into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on each cake.
- 13 Spoon raspberry sauce on top and replace the cake tops.
- 14 Pipe a swirl of mascarpone cream on top and place a raspberry on top. Sift icing sugar over the top of the cakes.





## Orange jelly and chocolate cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**1 pack of orange jelly**  
**250ml (9fl oz) boiling water**  
**2 tbsp clear orange marmalade**  
**1 tsp lemon juice**  
**2 free-range eggs**  
**160ml (6fl oz) milk**  
**5 tbsp melted butter**  
**225g (8oz) plain flour**

**75g (2½oz) caster sugar**  
**1 tbsp baking powder**  
**½ tsp salt**

### FOR THE GANACHE

**112ml (4fl oz) double cream**  
**225g (8oz) plain chocolate, chopped**

- 1 Break up the jelly into pieces and dissolve in the boiling water in a heatproof jug.
- 2 Stir in the marmalade and lemon juice. Pour into a shallow tray so that it is about 5mm (¼in) deep. Chill until set.
- 3 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 4 Beat the eggs in a mixing bowl, then add the milk and butter.
- 5 Sift in the dry ingredients and stir quickly until just combined. The mixture will be lumpy.
- 6 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes, until risen and golden. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 Carefully slice off the top of each cake.
- 8 Cut the jelly into 12 discs, just smaller than the top of the cupcakes. Place each jelly disc on top of a cupcake and replace the tops.
- 9 For the chocolate ganache, heat the cream in a pan and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and pour onto the chocolate. Stir until melted, then cool. Chill until thick.
- 10 Spread the ganache on the cakes. Leave to set.



## Vintage rose cupcakes

Makes 12

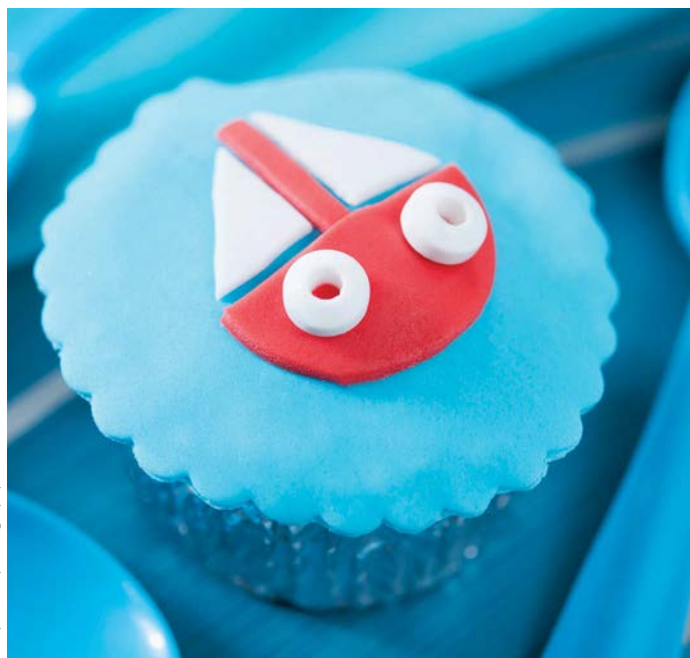
### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**175g (6oz) butter**  
**175g (6oz) caster sugar**  
**3 free-range eggs, beaten**  
**175g (6oz) self-raising flour**  
**1 tsp rose water**

### TO DECORATE

**400-500g (14-18oz) white sugarpaste**  
**cornflour**  
**icing sugar**  
**3-4 tbsp apricot jam, warmed**

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole deep bun or muffin tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs until blended.
- 3 Sift in the flour and beat well. Stir in the rose water.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 Roll out the white sugarpaste with a rose embossed rolling pin on a surface dusted with cornflour and icing sugar. Cut out rounds with a cutter, slightly larger than the diameter of the cakes.
- 6 Brush the tops of the cakes with a little apricot jam and attach the sugarpaste rounds.



## Fondant boat cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 150g (5oz) butter
- 150g (5oz) caster sugar
- 3 free-range eggs, beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 150g (5oz) self-raising flour
- 1 tbsp milk

### TO DECORATE

- 300-400g (11-14oz) blue sugarpaste
- icing sugar
- 3-4 tbsp apricot jam, warmed
- 300-400g (11-14oz) white sugarpaste
- red paste food colouring

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs and vanilla until blended. Sift in the flour and gently stir into the mixture with the milk until combined.
- 3 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 To decorate, roll out the blue sugarpaste thinly on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out rounds with a scallop-edged cutter, the same diameter as the cakes. Brush the tops of the cakes with a little apricot jam and attach the sugarpaste rounds.
- 5 Roll out about a third of the white sugarpaste on a surface dusted with icing sugar. Cut out 24 triangles for the boat sails.
- 6 Knead the trimmings and roll out thickly. Cut out 24 very small rounds and remove the centres with a smaller cutter.
- 7 Knead red food colouring into the remaining white sugarpaste.
- 8 Roll out as before and cut out 12 boat shapes, using a card template. Lightly brush with water and arrange on the cakes.
- 9 Brush the sails with water and attach to the cakes. Brush the white circles with water and attach to the boats. Leave to dry.

## Petit caramel cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 225g (8oz) plain flour
- 110g (4oz) light brown sugar
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- 225ml (8fl oz) milk
- 55g (2oz) unsalted butter, melted

50ml (1¾fl oz) honey

1 free-range egg

### FOR THE CARAMEL SAUCE

- 250g (9oz) caster sugar
- 4 tbsp water
- 150ml (5fl oz) whipping cream
- 55g (2oz) unsalted butter
- a few drops of vanilla extract

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Grease 24 mini muffin cups.
- 2 Stir together the flour, light brown sugar, baking powder and salt in a mixing bowl.
- 3 Whisk together the milk, butter, honey and egg.
- 4 Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and fold in gently until blended.
- 5 Spoon into the cups and bake for 8-10 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the caramel sauce, put the sugar into a heavy-based frying pan and stir in the water. Heat gently, tilting the pan (do not stir) until the sugar has dissolved. Increase the heat and bubble for 4-5 minutes until golden brown.
- 7 Remove from the heat and carefully stir in the cream and butter. Stir in the vanilla. Pour into a jug or bowl and leave to cool.
- 8 Drizzle the caramel sauce over the cupcakes.





## Paris-Brest cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 250g (9oz) plain flour
- 50g (1½oz) ground almonds
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 2 free-range eggs
- 110g (4oz) light muscovado sugar
- 80ml (3fl oz) sunflower oil
- 125ml (4½fl oz) soured cream
- 36 flaked almonds

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 240g (8oz) unsalted butter
- 60g (2oz) light muscovado sugar
- 2 tbsp golden syrup
- 1 tbsp double cream
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

- 200g (7oz) icing sugar

### TO DECORATE

- toasted flaked almonds, chopped toasted almonds
- icing sugar

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease 12 muffin cups.
- 2 Mix together the flour, ground almonds, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda in a bowl.
- 3 Whisk the eggs lightly in a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar, oil and soured cream and mix well.
- 4 Stir in the dry ingredients until just combined.
- 5 Spoon into the cups and place three flaked almonds on each.
- 6 Bake for about 25 minutes until golden and risen. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 For the buttercream, put 80g (3oz) of the butter in a pan with the muscovado sugar and syrup and heat over a low heat until a deep, amber colour.
- 8 Remove from the heat and add the cream and vanilla, stirring continually. Set aside to cool to room temperature.
- 9 Beat the remaining butter until very soft. Sift in the icing sugar and beat well until smooth and fluffy.
- 10 Add the cooled butter mixture and beat until blended. Chill for 15-20 minutes until firm enough to pipe.
- 11 Spoon into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe on top of the cakes. Sprinkle with a few flaked and chopped almonds.
- 12 Sift over a little icing sugar just before serving.





Photos of Debbie © Adel Hanna

NEW  
FEATURE

# Cupcake diaries of a couturier

Put yourself in the forefront of fashion with designer cupcakes – Debbie Wingham shows us how.

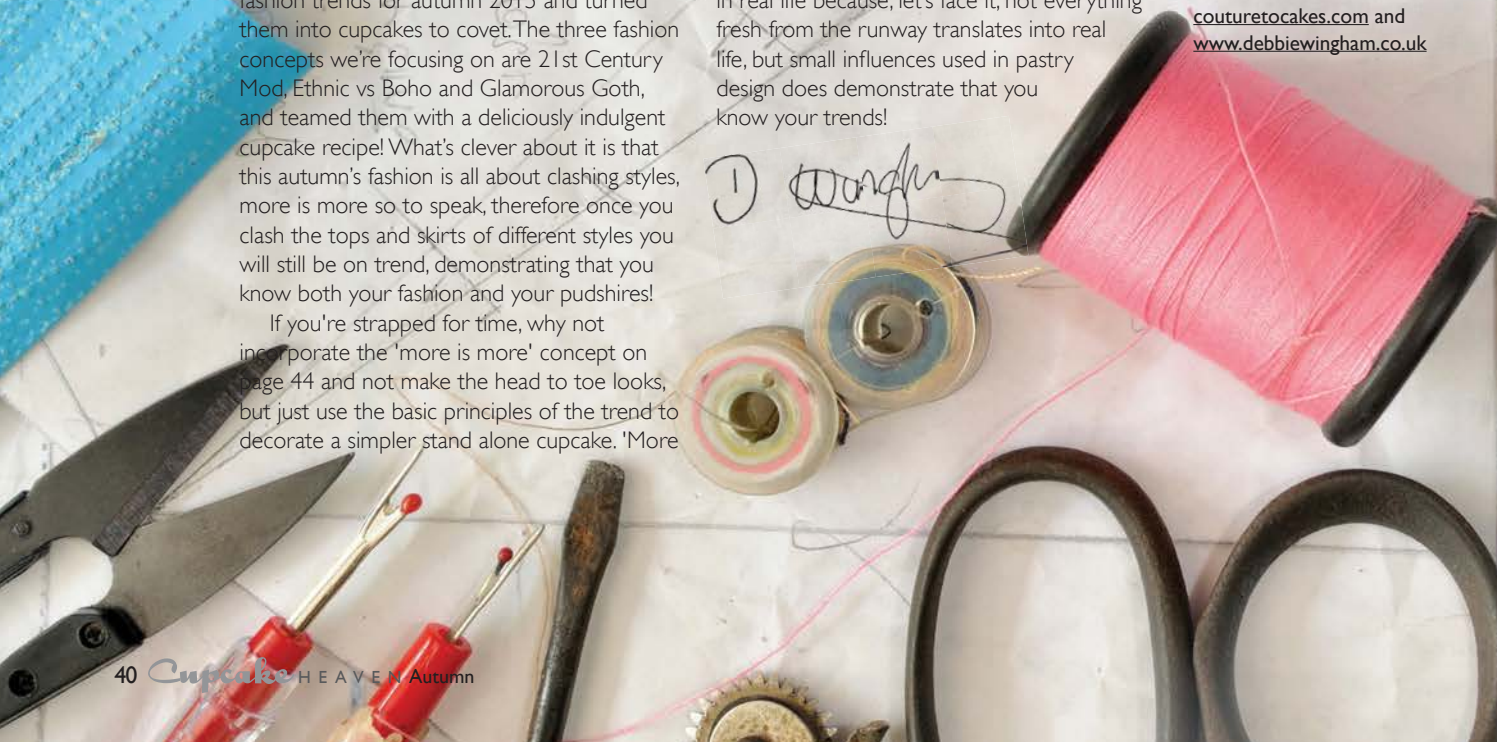
Getting ready for a girls' night in and want to wow your friends with your cupcakes? Simply turn to the catwalk for inspiration! Over the next five pages we've taken the hottest fashion trends for autumn 2015 and turned them into cupcakes to covet. The three fashion concepts we're focusing on are 21st Century Mod, Ethnic vs Boho and Glamorous Goth, and teamed them with a deliciously indulgent cupcake recipe! What's clever about it is that this autumn's fashion is all about clashing styles, more is more so to speak, therefore once you clash the tops and skirts of different styles you will still be on trend, demonstrating that you know both your fashion and your pudshires!

If you're strapped for time, why not incorporate the 'more is more' concept on page 44 and not make the head to toe looks, but just use the basic principles of the trend to decorate a simpler stand alone cupcake. 'More

is more' is pretty much as it sounds, everything you can think of across many style themes all clashed together. I suspect that this particular concept works better on cakes than in real life because, let's face it, not everything fresh from the runway translates into real life, but small influences used in pastry design does demonstrate that you know your trends!



Debbie Wingham is an internationally renowned haute couturier and a celebrity gown designer, and also designs cakes under the company name Couture To Cakes. She has been described as the new Nigella of cake artistry and has made cakes for the *Downton Abbey* cast, Amanda Holden, Simon Cowell and Holly Willoughby to name a few. To find out more about Debbie and her beautiful cakes, visit [www.couturetocakes.com](http://www.couturetocakes.com) and [www.debbiewingham.co.uk](http://www.debbiewingham.co.uk)







## Champagne cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**160g (5½oz) unsalted butter**

**160g (5½oz) caster sugar**

**170g (6oz) plain flour**

**2½ tsp baking powder**

**3 large free-range eggs, at room temperature**

**3 tbsp Chambord**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with cupcake cases.
- 2** Cream the butter and sugar together for 2 minutes using an electric hand mixer.
- 3** Crack the eggs into a jug and lightly beat them. Add the Champagne to the eggs.
- 4** Sift the flour and baking powder on top of the creamed butter and sugar mixture.
- 5** Add the egg and Champagne mixture to the bowl.
- 6** Mix everything together with an electric hand mixer at medium speed for 2 minutes.
- 7** Divide the batter among liners.
- 8** Bake for 18 minutes. Press lightly on top of the cakes – if they spring back they are ready.
- 9** Remove from the oven and place on a cooling rack if possible. Once cooled you can apply the mascarpone and berries filling.



## Chambord and fresh berries mascarpone cream

Covers and fills 12 cupcakes

**250g (9oz) pot of mascarpone**

**1½ tbsp icing sugar (Chambord is very sweet, so it doesn't require much icing sugar)**

**½ a punnet of blackberries (chopped into four)**

**½ a punnet of raspberries**

**1½ tbsp Chambord**

- 1** Whip the mascarpone with the icing sugar.
- 2** Add Chambord, then whip for a further 30 seconds until combined. Take out 2 tbsp of the mixture and set aside for spreading on top of the cupcakes after they have been filled, because with the berries combined it won't make a good foundation for the fondant.
- 3** Add the loosely chopped berries and combine – in this case raspberries and blackberries were used.
- 4** Hollow out the centre of the cupcakes either using a tool or a knife.
- 5** Spoon in the mascarpone and berries mixture.
- 6** Spread plain mascarpone cream on top of the cupcakes as a foundation for fondant. You're now ready to start decorating your couture cupcakes.

**TIP** I have used Ace of Spades Champagne for this recipe, but it works with prosecco or more affordable champers. If you want to, you can make it entirely non-alcoholic for a girlie detox night in. You could swerve the champers altogether and swap the Chambord for a raspberry cordial. Marks and Spencer do a very good one, which I often use in cupcakes. It's called Scottish raspberry cordial and is the closest taste to Chambord I have been able to find.





## Couture cupcakes

### EQUIPMENT

white fondant

food colourings – blue, brown, red, peach and yellow

fondant in colour of your choice

white metallic food paint

petal paste

circle and small flower cutters

Marvelous Molds – Skull Cameo and Spike Strap silicone moulds

Lakeland – pattern stencil embossers

Claire Bowman – cake lace and mats

acetate paper for homemade stencils

rolling pins, large and small

scribing tool

cocktail sticks

crocodile skin and ostrich silicone mats, bought or homemade

delicate strung crystal mould

### Faces

1 To mix the skin colour, take some white fondant and make a well in the centre. Add a drop of peach with a hint of yellow and pink food colouring to create flesh colour for the faces. If it goes too dark, then just bring the colour back a tad by adding a bit more white fondant, then roll out.

2 Use a circle (cupcake) size cutter to cut the face shape to cover the entire cupcake.

3 For professional looking hair, either use an extruder or roll out fondant really thin and cut long thin strips to create strands of hair. If you mix a little petal paste with your chosen hair colour fondant, this will allow you to go very thin and will make it easier to manipulate curls and texture. I've used bought fondant in red, black and yellow, but you may wish to make different hair colours in order to resemble a friend who is coming to your girls' night in.

### FOR THE EYEBROWS

1 Use the same technique as the hair; but with finer strands put symmetrically in place. Use a ruler to measure where you are going to place them and mark the centre point of the brow and the end with a scribe tool.

### FOR THE EYES

1 Cut oval or circle shapes, depending on the type of eye you would like, from a homemade stencil template. You can use paper and then just place on top and cut around it, but for a stencil that will last you can use acetate paper. Scribe the sample from a paper template onto the acetate paper, then cut around the eye shape. Place the acetate template on top of the white fondant and press to make an impression outline of where to cut on the fondant.

2 For the eye colour, dot whatever colour you want to use in the middle of the white





fondant. I have used blue to create the eye colour in the centre of the eye. Use a fine paintbrush and black food colouring to create the pupil and, with the end of a cocktail stick, dip it in the white lustre food colouring (I used metallic food paint by Rainbow Dust) and dot this onto the side of the pupil. This gives the eye a little sparkle and makes the eye appear more lifelike.

- 3 For sunglasses, cut two small circle shapes (I used the top of a piping tool), cut off the top so that it has a flat and curved side (three-quarters of a circle) and, using very thinly rolled petal paste, cut really fine strips. One is for the top of the shades, which needs to be a bit bigger in width than the others, then the other two need to be perfectly symmetrical to wrap around as the frame of the sunglasses. Place these by using a damp fine brush to mark the area, then place the frame of the sunglasses around the lens pieces.
- 4 Hand paint the lip shape with a fine paintbrush and red food colouring.
- 5 Continue the technique described above on all the faces. If you fancy adding your own twist, adjust to your own specification.

## Upper bodies

### 21ST CENTURY MOD

Mod is short for modernist and generally speaking is characterised by very bold prints and patterns, and often centres around black and white themes.

- 1 Cover the cupcake in a circle of black fondant. Use a pattern embosser to create mod-inspired fabric and collar out of thinly rolled petal paste. The pattern and collar are attached by brushing the edge you plan to attach to the cupcake with a damp brush.
- 2 Pipe tiny dots of royal icing down the cupcake centre and, when dry, paint with lustre dust mixed with a touch of alcohol

to make the silver buttons. You can just use lustre dust, but the alcohol will make the lustre dust more like a paint, giving you a stronger shade of silver.

### GLAMOROUS GOTH

Glamorous Goth features tailored macabre pieces, often adorned with studs, skulls and crosses. You can create great effects on cupcakes with moulds. Layered cake lace over contrasting colour fondant will complete the glam goth look.

- 1 Roll out your black fondant. Using a lace mat, gently rub Trex over the surface to prevent sticking, then lay the black fondant over the lace mat and use the rolling pin to engrave the pattern.
- 2 Cut a circle to fit the top of your cupcake and place it on the cupcake. Use the leftover paste from the circle you cut to create the ruffle/flounce sleeves.
- 3 With leftover lace embossed fondant, create a hand-manipulated bow and use a contrasting colour for the centre of the bow. Put it on the waist of the outfit (the bottom of the cupcake).
- 4 Brush the sleeves and the bow with silver lustre dust to add some dimension. Add the spike strap to create the spike collar.

### ETHNIC VS BOHO

Ethnic vs Boho is a trend that never seems to go out of fashion. Although generally it is more of a spring/summer look, it's slightly more relaxed and often a combination of mix and match prints and colours in autumn. This autumn will see a lot of influences in ponchos, oversized knitted jackets, etc.

- 1 Use a patterned rolling pin or texture mat of your choice to create a textured surface on your base fondant. I used a crocodile leather silicone mat that I made myself. If you don't have a texture mat or rolling pin, you could cut a pattern of your choice by finding a print online, printing it out and

using the printout to trace onto acetate paper with a scribing tool.

- 2 Roll the acetate sheet with imprinted edge directly onto the fondant, this will leave a noticeable texture. From this textured fondant cut two bat wing inspired sleeves and place them either side of the cupcake. Use an embosser to create a bohemian influence print with various colours of fondant and cut out different shapes as shown. Attach with a small amount of water.

### FOR THE HANDS

- 1 Create the pair of hands by using petal paste. Shape the hand by making a rectangle shape to scale and cutting fingers.
- 2 Create a curve to the fingers in order to capture the thumb and little finger; then air brush to a flesh colour (peach with a hint of yellow and pink pre-mixed then poured into the airbrush funnel). Alternatively, pre-mix the flesh colour using the same technique as for the face, but use petal paste instead of fondant, it makes for a finer finger and more realistic shape.
- 3 For fingernails, mark with cocktail sticks at the end of the finger; then hand paint in red.

## Skirts

For the skirt size allow a tad extra paste – just fold behind in a seam and it will make for a neater visual impact.

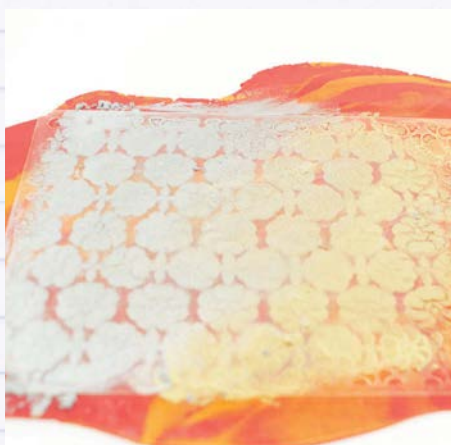
### 21ST CENTURY MOD OUTFIT

Red fondant rolled over a lace mat, with a black fondant belt. Embellish the belt with a red fondant flower cut from a mini flower petal cutter with a black piped edible gem centre.

### GLAMOROUS GOTH

Use the same technique as above, but this time cut an asymmetric skirt (slightly longer at one side than the other), with a red fondant belt. Use a mould to create an embellishment for the belt – I used a skull cameo.





## ETHNIC VS BOHO

- 1 Create a tie-dye orange and red fondant by rolling two sausage-like pieces of red and orange fondant and twist them together. Do this around five times and then roll out with a rolling pin. You get a unique tie-dye effect piece of fondant.
- 2 Place a flower stencil on top and roll until the stencil sticks to the fondant, but is still peelable, then brush over the stencil with gold and silver lustre dust.
- 3 Remove the stencil and cut the skirt to size. For the ruffle, create this by cutting a semicircle and placing the inside of the curve into a straight line, which automatically creates a ruffle effect.

## More is more...

The best advice I can give for these simpler fashion-inspired cupcakes is to choose one small detail that will appear on every single design. Not only does it make life a little easier for you, but somehow makes the clashing work. It's always important to tie-in your aesthetics when you're creating a series of pieces. I have chosen the colour cerise pink and silver, which appears on all three cupcakes. The rest

is borderline fashion faux pas, but it's actually really good fun to think outside the box from time to time. You can do no wrong with this design, providing your finish on each crazy piece of the fondant jigsaw is up to standard – it just works somehow. Where else would you infuse spikes, ostrich, crystals and basket weave?

Take a mascarpone cream topped cupcake with a very thin layer of fondant as the base for the designs, as piecing together fondant like a jigsaw directly onto the cream surface could result in cream oozing out of the seams, which will ruin the design entirely. (Do be careful not to go too thick with the fondant though, because this can comprise the flavour.)

I used most of the techniques described in the main cupcakes to make the fondant jigsaw. The fondant rolled over a Wilton mat and rubbed with lustre dust and the Ethnic vs Boho skirt are both echoed in the red with gold flower and cerise with silver flower designs. I also used a contrasting yellow fondant with pink lustre dust rubbed in to give the semi clash/match style. I used the spike strap once again, which I used on the Glam Goth design.

New tools I used were my homemade silicone ostrich mat – that's the red section – and another homemade silicone mould which I copied tiny strung crystals. Making your own

silicone mats and moulds is actually quite easy, but can be expensive to do. I always think cost-per-use ultimately means it pays off, but you don't have to make your own – that's the beauty of this technique. You can see what tools you have and piece together techniques. To make the strung crystals, I have used isomalt brushed with lustre, because it gives the most realistic jewellery look, but does take a lot of practice. Only use this technique when you have the correct gloves to prevent burning your skin and also the correct pouring containers. Lakeland have some great ones that are good for pouring chocolate and hot sugar.

I also used a basket weave rolling pin on the orange fondant. Any rolling pins or embossers will work on these and don't be afraid to experiment. I guarantee that what feels so wrong while you're doing it will work out, providing you cleverly try and pick out repeat shades over various textures.

When jigsawing together the fondant, you can do curved shapes, straight lines, zigzags – anything you like really.

I always think a small finishing touch is required, whether it's a bow, brooch, flower, feather, whatever you like, but just make sure you pick out similar shades, because that's what prevents 'more is more' overload.





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NEW  
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# Mug CAKES





## Apple cinnamon mugcake

Makes 1 cake

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- 3 tbsp plain flour
- 1½ tbsp sugar
- ¼ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon, plus extra for sprinkling
- 1 free-range egg, beaten
- 2 tbsp plain Greek yoghurt
- ½ tsp vanilla
- 2 tbsp diced apple

- 1 Lightly grease a large microwaveable mug.
- 2 Mix together the dry ingredients until combined.
- 3 Add the egg and stir until blended.
- 4 Add the Greek yoghurt and vanilla and stir well, then stir in the diced apples.
- 5 Pour the mixture into the mug, leaving plenty of room for rising – the cake will nearly double in height in the microwave.
- 6 Microwave on high for about 2 minutes, until the cake is risen and cooked through.
- 7 Sprinkle with ground cinnamon when cool.

**TIP** Microwave cooking times vary widely, so the cake needs to be watched all the time as it cooks. Depending on your microwave it could be ready in 2 minutes or it could take up to 3 minutes.



## Chocolate and mint mugcake

Makes 1 cake

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- 4 tbsp self-raising flour
- 4 tbsp sugar
- 1 free-range egg
- 3 tbsp cocoa powder
- 2 mint chocolate squares, chopped
- 3 tbsp milk
- 3 tbsp sunflower oil

### TO DECORATE

mint leaves

- 1 Lightly grease a large microwaveable mug.
- 2 Whisk together all the ingredients until combined.
- 3 Pour the mixture into the mug, leaving plenty of room for rising – the cake will nearly double in height in the microwave.
- 4 Microwave on high for 1½-3 minutes.
- 5 Decorate with mint leaves.

**TIP** Microwave cooking times vary widely so the cake needs to be watched all the time as it cooks. Depending on your microwave it could be ready in 60 seconds or it could take 3 minutes.





## Carrot mugcakes

Makes 2 cakes

### FOR THE MUGCAKES

- 75g (2½oz) plain flour
- 50g (1¾oz) light brown sugar
- ½ tbsp mixed spice
- ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- a pinch of salt
- 1 free-range egg
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 50ml (1¾fl oz) sunflower oil
- 50ml (1¾fl oz) orange juice
- 25g (1oz) finely grated carrots

### FOR THE ICING

- 6 tbsp icing sugar
- 4 tsp lemon juice

### TO DECORATE

- grated orange zest

- 1 Lightly grease two large microwaveable mugs.
- 2 Stir together the flour, sugar, spice, bicarbonate of soda and salt.
- 3 Whisk together the egg and vanilla until blended, then whisk in the oil and orange juice.
- 4 Pour into the dry ingredients and stir until just combined. Gently stir in the carrots.
- 5 Put into the mugs and microwave, one at a time on high for 1½-3 minutes until cooked through. Leave to cool completely.
- 6 For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl and beat in the lemon juice to make a smooth, thick icing.
- 7 Place a star-shaped stencil on each cake and spoon on the icing, spreading evenly. Sprinkle with orange zest and leave to set.

**TIP** Microwave cooking times vary widely so the cake needs to be watched all the time as it cooks. Depending on your microwave it could be ready in 90 seconds or it could take 3 minutes.



## Lemon and poppy seed mugcake

Makes 1 cake

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- 2 tbsp butter, melted
- 1 free-range egg
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 3 tbsp caster sugar
- 4 tbsp self-raising flour
- 2 tsp poppy seeds
- a pinch of salt

- 1 Lightly grease a large microwaveable mug.
- 2 Beat together the butter, egg and lemon juice until combined.
- 3 Add the caster sugar, self-raising flour, poppy seeds and salt and beat well until smooth.
- 4 Pour the mixture into the mug, leaving plenty of room for rising – the cake will nearly double in height in the microwave.
- 5 Cook for 1½-2 minutes until risen and cooked through.

**TIP** Microwave cooking times vary widely so the cake needs to be watched all the time as it cooks. Depending on your microwave it could be ready in 90 seconds or it could take 2 minutes.



## Mugcake crumble

Makes 1 cake

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- ½ an apple, peeled and diced
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp sugar
- a pinch of ground cinnamon
- 1 tbsp water

### FOR THE CRUMBLE

- 1 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 1 tbsp sugar
- ½ tbsp chopped almonds

- 1 Mix the apples, lemon juice, sugar, cinnamon and water in a large microwaveable mug.
- 2 Cook in the microwave on high for 2-3 minutes until the apples are tender.
- 3 For the crumble, mix together all the ingredients with a fork or your fingers until crumbly and spoon on top of the apples.
- 4 Cook in the microwave for 1½-2½ minutes.





## Pink praline mugcake

Makes 1 cake

### FOR THE MUGCAKE

- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 large free-range egg
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 25g (1oz) plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1-2 tbsp pink sugared almonds, crushed

- 1 Lightly grease a large microwaveable mug.
- 2 Beat together all the ingredients, except the sugared almonds until just smooth. Gently stir in the sugared almonds.
- 3 Pour the mixture into the mug, leaving plenty of room for rising – the cake will nearly double in height in the microwave.
- 4 Microwave the mug on high for 75-90 seconds, until risen and cooked through.

**TIP** Microwave cooking times vary widely so the cake needs to be watched all the time as it cooks. Depending on your microwave it could be ready in 60 seconds or it could take 2 minutes.



## Smarties mugcakes

Makes 4 cakes

### FOR THE MUGCAKES

- 110g (4oz) sugar
- 110ml (4fl oz) buttermilk
- 50ml (1¾fl oz) sunflower oil
- 1 free-range egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 55g (2oz) plain flour
- a large pinch of bicarbonate of soda
- a pinch of salt

### TO DECORATE

#### Smarties

- 1 Lightly grease four medium-sized microwaveable mugs.
- 2 Whisk together the sugar, buttermilk, sunflower oil, egg and vanilla until smooth.
- 3 Whisk in the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt until just combined.
- 4 Pour the mixture into the mugs.
- 5 Microwave one mug at a time for 1-2 minutes until risen and cooked through. Cool and decorate with Smarties.

# Q&A

## Ask the experts

Whatever your cupcake and baking questions our experts can help. Email your queries to [sally.fitzgerald@anthem-publishing.com](mailto:sally.fitzgerald@anthem-publishing.com)

### Q My friend is vegan and I'd love to bake her some cupcakes for her birthday. Can you give me any advice?

Baking egg-less and dairy-free cupcakes is as simple as simple can be! These handy hints will get you on the road to vegan-baking-bliss!

- Experiment with plant-based ingredients to find the ones you prefer. Soya milk or rice milk are excellent replacements for dairy milk. Coconut and nut milks are great too, but they will add additional flavour to your bakes.
- Vegan cupcakes are easier made using flavourless oils rather than margarine to replace the butter, because margarines have added water. Using vegetable, sunflower or light rapeseed oil in a cupcake will produce a moist bake with a delicate crumb.
- Eggs can be replaced with fruit or vegetable purées, soya yoghurt, ground flaxseed, curdled soya milk or a commercially made egg replacement product.
- Don't over-stir your batter! Only ever stir wet and dry ingredients until they are just combined. Avoid using an electric mixer or going heavy on the hand-mixing because you will end up with a dense, thick cake. Ignore what you know about 'whipping air into the batter to make it light and fluffy', this does not work with vegan baking!
- Mix all of your dry ingredients first and then add your liquid ingredients in at the last second. Without eggs in the bake, you are relying entirely on your baking powder and bicarbonate of soda to do the leavening, so don't let them start doing their business until it is just about time to pop them in the oven.
- Don't decorate or eat it straight away – let

it rest. After you make your cupcakes, they will often have a thin 'crusty' layer along the top. You can eliminate this crispness by placing your completely cooled cupcakes into an airtight plastic container for a couple of hours or overnight. The moisture of the cake is then allowed to work its way through and you will be left with a very soft sponge.

Melissa Morgan, [www.msccupcake.co.uk](http://www.msccupcake.co.uk)

### Q My cupcakes keep peeling away from their liners once they've cooled. What can I do to stop this?

When you bake your cupcakes, make sure they are 100% ready before you remove them. You should be able to gently press the top of the cupcake and the cake rebounds immediately when you lift away. Once out of the oven, you need to remove them from the muffin tray immediately and place them on a cooling rack. This is very important, as it allows the air to circulate and stops condensation building up in the cases, which is often why they peel.

Opening the oven in the first 10 minutes of baking not only makes cupcakes sink in the middle, but it can contribute to cases peeling.

Also, make sure your muffin tin is really dry and clean. If you've used poor quality cases, you may find grease marks left in the muffin tin. If you don't dry this with some paper towel you will find the next cupcakes you bake will peel.

Purchase quality cases. Most of the cases you can buy in supermarkets will fade when used or even peel away from the cakes. A good quality case will give you a professional finish. I personally love the white cases from Lakeland.

There are many causes for cases peeling, but if you stick to these rules you should find that peeling cases are very few and far between.

Shelly Baker, [www.mrsbakerscakes.co.uk](http://www.mrsbakerscakes.co.uk)

### Q Could you please explain the difference to me between food contact glitter and edible glitter, and also how I use these on my cupcakes?

Food Contact Glitter has been tested and approved for use on and around food. It should be used on decorations that can easily be removed from the cake prior to consuming. Applying the glitter to your decorations is easy and, to ensure that no stray glitter contaminates your cake, use Rainbow Dust Cake Decorators Glaze. This type of glitter is extremely popular, and comes in a large palette of colours and gives the wow factor to your cakes. Examples of decorations used with this type of glitter are: flowers, butterflies, wired shapes etc – this type of decoration is easily removed.

Edible Glitter is used when you require a glitter that is intended to be consumed along with the cake. The colours range from delicate pastels to strong bold colours and, although it doesn't have the same vibrancy as the food contact glitter, it still gives a nice sparkly finish that cake decorators strive for. It can be used on desserts, cupcakes, ice cream, tarts and more. When applying the glitter to your cake decorations, a small amount of Rainbow Dust Edible Glue is all you need. If the surface is tacky, as for ice cream and jam tarts for instance, just sprinkle liberally onto the surface.

Tracy Howard, [www.rainbowdust.co.uk](http://www.rainbowdust.co.uk)



#### Melissa Morgan

Melissa is often better known as Ms Cupcake, one of the UK's leading vegan cupcake makers. She's written the book *Ms. Cupcake: The Naughtiest Vegan Cakes in Town*, and opened London's first entirely vegan retail bakery in Brixton. Find out more by visiting [www.msccupcake.co.uk](http://www.msccupcake.co.uk)



#### Shelly Baker

Shelly is mum to three children and a sugarcraft expert. She works from her studio in Swindon, teaching classes in cake decoration. Shelly has won awards and published a cake decorating book on everything from beginner basics to advanced sugar work. Visit online at [www.mrsbakerscakes.co.uk](http://www.mrsbakerscakes.co.uk)



#### Tracy Howard

Tracy joined Rainbow Dust Colours in 2013. She is a skilled cake decorator and demonstrator and produces the fantastic content you see every day on the Rainbow Dust Facebook page. Tracy ensures each product range meets stringent quality standards. Visit [www.rainbowdust.co.uk](http://www.rainbowdust.co.uk)



# Indulgent

CUPCAKES



## Blueberry and lemon drizzle cakes

By Hannah Miles

Makes 8

### FOR THE CAKE

**225g (8oz) softened butter**

**225g (8oz) caster sugar**

**4 free-range eggs**

**225g (8oz) self-raising flour, sifted**

**2 tsp baking powder**

**2 tbsps buttermilk or sour cream**

**grated zest of 2 lemons**

### FOR THE FILLING

**200ml (7fl oz) double cream, whipped**

**4 tbsps lemon curd**

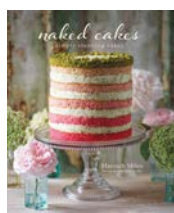
**200g (7oz) blueberries**

### FOR THE ICING

**170g (6oz) fondant icing sugar, sifted**

**freshly squeezed juice of 2 lemons**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2** Use an electric whisk to mix the butter and sugar in a bowl until light and creamy. Add the eggs and whisk again. Fold in the flour, baking powder and buttermilk using a spatula, until incorporated.
- 3** Grease eight 6.5cm (2½in) cake rings and place on a greased baking sheet. Fold the lemon zest into the cake batter and divide the mixture equally between the cake rings. You can do this either by spooning the batter in, or by putting the batter in a piping bag and piping it in neatly.
- 4** Bake in the oven for 20-30 minutes, until the cakes are golden brown and spring back to the touch. Leave the cakes to cool in the rings for a few minutes, then remove by sliding a sharp knife around the inside of each ring. Transfer the cakes to a wire rack and leave to cool completely.
- 5** Cut each cake in half and pipe a swirl of the whipped cream onto each bottom cake half using a piping bag with a star nozzle. Top with a little lemon curd and a few blueberries, then place the top cake half on.
- 6** For the icing, mix together the fondant icing sugar and lemon juice – add the lemon juice gradually as you may not need it all – until you have a smooth thick icing. Spoon the icing over the tops of the cakes, drizzling a few drops over the sides, and leave to set for a few minutes. Decorate with a few blueberries and leave the icing to set.
- 7** Store in the refrigerator until you are ready to serve. As these cakes contain fresh cream, they are best eaten on the day they are made, although they will keep for up to two days in the refrigerator.



The recipes on pages 56-59 are taken from *Naked Cakes* by Hannah Miles, photography by Steve Painter, published by Ryland Peters & Small. *Naked Cakes* is available to you for the special price of £11.99 including P&P (RRP£16.99) by calling Macmillan Direct on 01256 302 699 and quoting code GLR CM8.





## Clementine cakes

By Hannah Miles

Makes 10

### FOR THE CAKE

115g (4oz) softened butter

115g (4oz) caster sugar

2 free-range eggs

115g (4oz) self-raising flour, sifted

1 tsp baking powder

1 tbsp buttermilk or sour cream

1 tbsp clementine juice

grated zest of 2 clementines, plus extra to decorate

### FOR THE ICING

170g (6oz) fondant icing sugar, sifted

40ml (1½ fl oz) clementine juice

### FOR THE PETALS

20-30 edible, pesticide-free orange rose petals

1 free-range egg white

caster sugar, for dusting

- 1 Begin by preparing the crystallized rose petals, as they need to dry overnight. Whisk the egg white until very foamy. Using a paintbrush, paint the egg white on both the front and the back of the petals and sprinkle with sugar. This is best done by holding the sugar just above the petal and sprinkling. Have a plate below to catch the excess sugar. Repeat with all the petals, covering them one at a time, and place on a baking sheet lined with a silicone mat or baking parchment. Leave in a warm place to dry overnight. Once dried, store the petals in an airtight container until you are ready to serve.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 3 Use an electric whisk to mix the butter and sugar in a bowl until light and creamy. Add the eggs and then whisk again. Fold in the flour, baking powder and buttermilk or sour cream using a spatula, until incorporated.
- 4 Grease ten 8cm (3in) cake rings and place on a greased baking sheet. Fold the clementine juice and zest into the cake batter and divide the mixture equally between the cake rings. You can do this either by spooning the batter in, or by putting the batter in a piping bag and piping it in neatly. Bake in the preheated oven for 20-30 minutes, until the cakes are golden brown and spring back to the touch and a knife inserted into the centre of each cake comes out clean. Leave the cakes to cool in the rings for a few minutes, then remove by sliding a sharp knife around the inside of each ring. Transfer the cakes to a wire rack and leave to cool completely.
- 5 For the icing, mix the fondant icing sugar with the clementine juice until it is just runny, and spoon a little over the top of each cake. Decorate with the crystallized rose petals and some grated clementine zest, and leave until the icing is set.
- 6 These cakes are best eaten on the day they are made, but will store for up to two days in an airtight container.





## Orange and white chocolate dome cakes

By Hannah Miles

Makes 18

### FOR THE CAKE

**225g (8oz) softened butter**

**225g (8oz) caster sugar**

**4 free-range eggs**

**225g (8oz) self-raising flour, sifted**

**2 tsp baking powder**

**2 tbsp buttermilk or sour cream**

**grated zest of 2 oranges**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

### FOR THE SYRUP

**freshly squeezed juice of 3 oranges**

**2 tbsp icing sugar, sifted**

### FOR THE DECORATION

**100g (3½oz) white chocolate**

**18 chocolate-coated orange peel sticks**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2** Use an electric whisk to mix the butter and sugar in a bowl until light and creamy. Add the eggs and whisk again. Fold in the flour, baking powder and buttermilk using a spatula, until incorporated.
- 3** Grease three 6-hole chocolate teacake moulds or silicone muffin moulds. Fold the orange zest and vanilla into the cake batter and divide between the holes of the moulds. If you only have one teacake mould, cook the cakes in batches, washing the mould between each use. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, until the cakes are golden brown and spring back to the touch. Press the cakes out of the moulds and cool on a wire rack. When cool, place on a rack, flat side down, so that the cakes look dome-shaped.
- 4** For the syrup, in a saucepan, heat the orange juice and icing sugar and bring to the boil. Remove from the heat and, using a large spoon, drizzle over the tops of the cakes. It is best to place a sheet of foil under the rack to catch any drips.
- 5** To make the decoration, put the white chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of simmering water, making sure that the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water. Heat until melted, stirring so that the chocolate is smooth. Let cool.
- 6** Use a teaspoon to drizzle chocolate on top of each cake. Put a chocolate orange stick in the centre and leave the chocolate to set.
- 7** These cakes will keep for up to two days stored in an airtight container, although they are best eaten on the day they are made.



## Pink Champagne cupcakes

By Jemma Lloyd from Iced Jems ([www.icedjems.com](http://www.icedjems.com))

Makes 10

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**80g (3oz) unsalted butter**  
**275g (9¾oz) caster sugar**  
**240g (8½oz) self-raising flour**  
**2 free-range eggs**  
**160ml (5¾fl oz) milk**  
**80ml (3fl oz) rose Champagne**  
**a few drops of pink food colouring paste**

### TO DECORATE

**150g (5½oz) unsalted butter (cooled to room temperature)**  
**500g (1lb 1oz) icing sugar**  
**100ml (3½fl oz) rose Champagne**  
**a few drops of pink food colouring paste**  
**tiny silver balls**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3.
- 2 In a large bowl, pour in your butter, sugar and flour and mix on a low speed until you have a fine breadcrumb consistency.
- 3 In a jug, pour in your eggs, milk and rose Champagne, whisking with a fork until well combined.
- 4 Pour this mixture into your breadcrumbs and mix on a medium speed until you have a smooth cupcake batter.
- 5 Add a few drops of the food colouring paste to your batter and mix again until you have a light pink shade. I would always recommend using a paste or gel for colouring, water based food

colours are very weak in comparison and you pretty much need a whole bottle to achieve the same colour.

- 6 Pour the batter into your cupcake cases and fill them about two-thirds full. I used pretty silver baking cups available from my online shop for £1.50 a pack. They are quite large, so if using other cases you can probably get 12-15 cupcakes from this mixture.
- 7 Transfer to the oven and bake for about 15-20 minutes until the cupcakes spring back when pushed down. I tend to do my cupcakes on a cooler temperature for longer, to avoid the 'volcano' look when the oven is too hot and the cupcakes rise too quick.
- 8 While the cupcakes are baking, make the Champagne buttercream.
- 9 Mix together your butter, icing sugar and rose Champagne in a large bowl until smooth. The Champagne adds a lot of moisture to the frosting, so you can add more icing sugar if you would like it thicker. Now add a few drops of pink food colour paste and mix again until you have a light pink colour.
- 10 Snip the end off a disposable piping bag and push in a jumbo piping tip – a normal closed star 2D tip will also work fine.
- 11 Fill the piping bag with rose Champagne frosting and swirl over each cupcake in a circular movement, starting from the outside and finishing in the middle.
- 12 Sprinkle with a few tiny silver balls and push in a paper straw as a finishing touch. I cut each paper straw into three.



# Shamrock shake cupcakes

By Christina Diedrich ([bakewithchristina.com](http://bakewithchristina.com))

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

**450g (1lb) plain flour**

**1½ tsp baking powder**

**¼ tsp salt**

**170g (6oz) sugar**

**115g (4oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature**

**2 large free-range eggs plus 1 yolk, at room temperature**

**115ml (4fl oz) mint chip milk (or milk)**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

**1 tsp mint extract**

**9 drops green food colouring**

**3 drops yellow food colouring**

## FOR THE TOPPING

**230g (8oz) plus 2 tbsp unsalted butter, at room temperature**

**900g (2lbs) icing sugar**

**115ml (4fl oz) whipping cream**

**½ tsp salt**

**1½ tsp vanilla extract, divided**

**1 tsp mint extract**

**green food colouring**

**green and white sugar pearls (if desired)**

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with cupcake liners and set aside.
- 2 In a medium-sized bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, and salt until well combined.
- 3 Using an electric mixer, beat together the sugar and butter and mix at medium-low speed until well combined (about 1½-2 minutes). Scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed. One at a time, add in the eggs and egg yolk on low speed until fully mixed in.
- 4 Continuing on low speed, alternately add in the flour mixture and the mint chip milk, a little bit at a time, until both the flour mixture and milk are mixed in well. Be sure not to over-mix the batter. Add in the vanilla and mint extracts and green and yellow food dyes until the colouring is evenly spread out and mixture is smooth.
- 5 Evenly distribute the batter into the 12 liners and bake for 15-17 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the centre comes out clean. Let cakes cool in the pan for 3-4 minutes, then immediately remove them and place on a wire rack to cool completely.

## FOR THE TOPPING

- 1 Using an electric mixer, beat the butter on a medium-high speed for 2 full minutes, scraping down the sides of the bowl occasionally. Starting on a low speed, slowly add in the icing sugar a heaped spoonful at a time, and slightly increase the speed as the mixture starts to form. Mix in the whipping cream, salt and ½ tsp of vanilla extract, then beat the mixture for 2 minutes on a medium-high speed until the frosting is smooth.
- 2 Divide the frosting in half. Mix the other 1 tsp of vanilla extract into one half and the mint extract into the other half. Add green food colouring into the mint extract half until the desired shade of colour is achieved.
- 3 Place the Ateco 846 piping tip (or other preferred tip) into the bottom of a piping bag and place the bag into a tall cup with the top of the bag folded over the edges of the cup. Spoon the vanilla frosting into one side of the bag and the mint frosting into the other side. This allows you to get the swirled colours when piping.
- 4 Pipe onto the cupcakes in a swirl pattern. Decorate with green and white sugar pearls, if desired.
- 5 Store cupcakes in an airtight container at room temperature for up to two days, or in the refrigerator for up to five days.



## Cinnamon sugar swirl cupcakes

By Christina Diedrich ([bakewithchristina.com](http://bakewithchristina.com))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

400g (14oz) plain flour

230g (8oz) sugar

1½ tsp cinnamon

¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 tsp baking powder

170g (6oz) butter, room temperature

3 free-range egg whites

2 tsp vanilla extract

115ml (4fl oz) sour cream

115ml (4fl oz) milk

### FOR THE CINNAMON SUGAR

1½ tbsp ground cinnamon

60g (2oz) sugar

### FOR THE TOPPING

115g (4oz) butter, at room temperature

115g (4oz) shortening

900g (2lb) icing sugar

2½ tsp cinnamon

¼ tsp vanilla extract

2 tbsp milk

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a muffin tin with cupcake liners and set aside.
- 2 Using an electric mixer, whisk together the flour, sugar, cinnamon, bicarbonate of soda and baking powder on low speed until well combined. Add in the butter, egg whites, vanilla, sour cream and milk on medium speed until smooth. Set aside.
- 3 For the cinnamon sugar, in a small bowl, combine together the cinnamon and sugar.
- 4 Place 1 tbsp of the batter into each cupcake liner, then sprinkle ¼ tsp of cinnamon sugar onto the batter. Repeat once more. Add one more large tbsp of batter to each cupcake liner. Sprinkle a little bit of the cinnamon sugar on top of each cupcake. Liners should be about half to three-quarters full.
- 5 Bake for 16-18 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the centre comes out with a few crumbs. Let cool in the pan for 1 minute, then transfer to a wire rack to finish cooling.

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 6 Using an electric mixer, beat the shortening and butter on medium speed until smooth. Slowly add in 700g (1½lb 8oz) of the icing sugar and mix until combined. Add in the cinnamon, vanilla extract and milk. Mix in the rest of the icing sugar and mix until smooth. Add in more milk if the icing seems too stiff.
- 7 Once the cupcakes are completely cooled, pipe the frosting onto the cupcakes using any tip you desire (I used Ateco Pastry Tip 808). Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to four days.





## Coconut vanilla bean cupcakes

By Christina Diedrich ([bakewithchristina.com](http://bakewithchristina.com))

Makes 18

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**700g (1lb 8oz) plain flour**

**1 ½ tsp baking powder**

**½ tsp salt**

**170g (6oz) shredded sweetened coconut**

**230g (8oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature**

**400g (14oz) sugar**

**4 large free-range egg whites**

**230ml (8fl oz) coconut milk**

**1 tsp vanilla bean paste**

**1 tsp coconut extract**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**230g (8oz) butter, softened**

**900g (2lb) icing sugar**

**1 ½ tsp coconut extract**

**4-5 tbsp milk**

**shredded sweetened coconut**

**bunny icing decorations, if desired**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a muffin tin with cupcake liners and set aside. In a medium bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder, salt and shredded coconut. Set aside.
- 2 Using an electric mixer, beat the butter on medium speed until creamy and slightly pale (about 3 minutes). Add in the sugar and beat until fully combined. One at a time, beat in the egg whites, scraping down the sides and bottom of the mixing bowl in between each addition.
- 3 Add in a third of the flour mixture, then half of the coconut milk. Repeat the process until both are gone. Beat in the vanilla bean paste and coconut extract until fully combined.
- 4 Scoop batter into the prepared liners until three-quarters full. The batter should make about 18 cupcakes.
- 5 Bake for 20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the centre comes out clean. Let cool in the pan for 3 minutes, then remove to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the topping, using an electric mixer, beat the butter on medium speed until creamy and smooth (about 3 minutes). Slowly add in the icing sugar, milk and coconut extract and mix for 2-3 minutes until smooth.
- 7 You can either pipe on the frosting (I used Ateco Pastry Tip 808) or spread with a knife, and then cover with the shredded coconut. Top with bunny decorations, if desired. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to four days. Serve at room temperature.



## Vanilla chai cupcakes

By Sarah Sibley from Bake With Sarah ([www.bakewithsarah.com](http://www.bakewithsarah.com))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**175g (6oz) soft butter (Stork)**

**175g (6oz) caster sugar**

**3 medium free-range eggs**

**175g (6oz) self-raising flour**

**3 chai tea bags**

**50ml (2fl oz) boiling water**

### FOR THE FROSTING

**500g (1lb 1oz) fondant icing sugar**

**250g (9oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3.
- 2** Line a muffin tin with 12 large muffin-sized cupcake cases.
- 3** Put the tea bags in a cup, pour the boiling water over them and put to one side for 5 minutes.
- 4** Cream together the butter and sugar until pale and creamy.
- 5** Slowly add the beaten eggs.
- 6** Add the flour and mix thoroughly until smooth.
- 7** Squeeze the tea bags into the cup to extract the liquid and pour it into the batter.
- 8** Tear a hole in one of the tea bags and take out two big pinches of the tea and add it to the batter, before mixing thoroughly.
- 9** Carefully spoon the batter into the cases.
- 10** Bake for around 25 minutes or until the sponge springs back when pressed lightly.
- 11** Remove from the tin and leave to cool on a wire rack.
- 12** Mix together the icing sugar and the vanilla.
- 13** Add the softened butter and mix until creamy and lump free.
- 14** Once the cakes are cool, pipe a swirl of frosting onto each cake.



# Hummingbird cupcakes

By Fergal Connolly and Judith Fertig

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

**125g (4½oz) plain flour**

**1 tsp baking powder**

**½ tsp cinnamon**

**125g (4½oz) caster sugar**

**115ml (4fl oz) sunflower oil**

**2 free-range eggs**

**150g (5oz) mashed bananas**

**1½ tbsp grated orange zest**

**60g (2½oz) grated carrot**

**100g (3½oz) tinned pineapple, crushed**

**60g (2½oz) desiccated coconut**

## FOR THE ICING

**115g (4oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**150g (5oz) icing sugar, sieved**

**2 tbsp freshly squeezed orange juice**

**2 tbsp orange marmalade**

**1** Preheat the oven to 175°C/Gas Mark 4.

**2** Place 12 baking cases in a muffin tin. In a medium bowl, sieve the flour, baking powder and cinnamon.

**3** In a large bowl, cream the sugar and oil with an electric whisk until light and fluffy.

**4** Beat in the eggs slowly, then gradually stir in the dry ingredients in three batches.

**5** Add the rest of the ingredients, and stir until combined.

**6** Spoon the batter into the cases. Bake for 25 minutes.

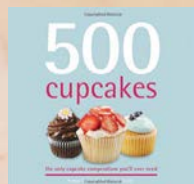
**7** Remove the tin from the oven and cool for 5 minutes.

**8** Remove the cupcakes and cool on a rack.

**9** To make the icing, beat the butter in a medium bowl. Add the sugar and orange juice and beat until smooth.

**10** Add the marmalade or save for garnish. Spread or dollop the icing onto the cupcakes and garnish with marmalade if desired.

**11** Store without icing in an airtight container for up to three days, or freeze for up to three months.



The recipes on pages 65-66 are taken from *500 Cupcakes* by Fergal Connolly and Judith Fertig, published by Apple Press, RRP £9.99.



## Gingerbread pots

By Fergal Connolly and Judith Fertig

Makes 12

### FOR THE GINGERBREAD

**150g (5oz) self-raising flour**

**150g (5oz) wholemeal self-raising flour**

**1 tbsp baking powder**

**4 tsp ground ginger**

**1 tsp cinnamon**

**225g (8oz) light brown sugar**

**2 free-range eggs**

**115ml (4fl oz) honey**

**115g (4oz) unsalted butter, melted**

**175ml (6fl oz) milk**

**2 tbsp roughly chopped crystallised ginger**

### FOR THE DRIZZLE

**125g (4½oz) icing sugar**

**5 tbsp lemon juice**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 175°C/Gas Mark 4. Place 12 paper baking cases in a muffin tin or line 12 small terracotta pots with greaseproof paper. Sieve the flours, baking powder, ginger and cinnamon into a large bowl. In a medium bowl, combine the remaining ingredients and beat with an electric whisk until smooth, about 2 to 3 minutes. Stir into the dry ingredients. Spoon the batter into the cases.
- 2 Bake for 20 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean. Remove the tin or pots from the oven and cool for 10 minutes, then remove the cakes and cool on a rack. To make the drizzle, sieve the icing sugar into a bowl and slowly add the lemon juice, stirring until just combined. Drizzle over the tops of the cupcakes. Store in an airtight container for up to three days.



## Pineapple upside down cupcakes

By Fergal Connolly and Judith Fertig

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**225g (8oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**225g (8oz) caster sugar**

**225g (8oz) self-raising flour**

**4 free-range eggs**

**1 tsp vanilla essence**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**570g (1lb 4oz) pineapple chunks**

**125g (4½oz) unsalted butter, melted**

**150g (5oz) brown sugar**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 175°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease two 12-cup muffin tins with butter and dust with a little flour, tapping out the excess. In the bottom of each cup, drizzle 1 tbsp melted butter; 1 tbsp pineapple and 1 tbsp brown sugar.
- 2 Place all the cupcake ingredients in a large bowl and beat with an electric whisk until smooth and pale, about 2 to 3 minutes. Spoon the batter on top of the pineapple mixture in each cup. Bake for 25 minutes. Remove the tins from the oven and cool for 10 minutes.
- 3 Turn out the cupcakes onto dessert plates, and serve warm with double cream if desired.
- 4 Store in an airtight container for up to two days.



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## Sticky toffee nests

By Stork ([www.bakewithstork.com](http://www.bakewithstork.com))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 150g (5½oz) Stork**
- 150g (5½oz) soft brown sugar**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- 3 large free-range eggs**
- 150g (5½oz) plain flour**
- 1 tsp baking powder**
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- 300ml (10fl oz) boiling water**
- 150g (5½oz) stoned dates, chopped**

### FOR THE NESTS

- 45g (1½oz) golden syrup**
- 45g (1½oz) soft brown sugar**
- 25g (1oz) Stork**
- 2 tbsp double cream**
- 80g (2¾oz) Rice Krispies**

### FOR THE FILLING

- 15g (½oz) melted milk chocolate**
- 100g (3½oz) small toffee chocolates**
- 25g (1oz) fudge chunks**

- 1** Place the boiling water and chopped stoned dates in a pan, bring to the boil and reduce the heat. Simmer for 10 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and allow to cool. Line a cupcake tin with 12 white paper cupcake liners.
- 2** In a large bowl, beat together the remaining cupcake ingredients – Stork, sugar, vanilla, eggs, plain flour, bicarbonate of soda and baking powder until evenly combined.
- 3** Add the cooled dates and mix well.
- 4** Divide the mixture between the cases (a cupcake tin lined with 12 paper cupcake liners) and bake in the oven for 25 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Transfer to a wire rack and allow to cool completely.
- 5** In a small pan, gently warm the golden syrup, brown sugar, Stork and cream, stirring frequently. Bring the mixture to the boil and simmer for 2 minutes.
- 6** Remove from the heat and pour over the Rice Krispies, stirring to mix.
- 7** Top each cupcake with the Rice Krispies mixture to form nests.
- 8** Melt the milk chocolate in a water bath.
- 9** Drizzle with the milk chocolate and add the toffee chocolates and mini fudge chunks to the centre of the nests.





## Lemon meringue cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 115g (4oz) butter
- 115g (4oz) caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs
- 115g (4oz) self-raising flour
- finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed lemon
- 4 tbsp lemon curd

### FOR THE MERINGUE

- 2 free-range egg whites
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar together in a mixing bowl until pale, fluffy and well combined. Add the eggs, one at a time, and beat until fully incorporated into the mixture.
- 3 Fold in the flour and lemon zest until well combined.
- 4 Spoon the mixture into the paper cases. Bake for 15-20 minutes, until golden-brown and springy to the touch. Cool in the tins for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 Using an apple corer, make a small hole in the centre of each cupcake, going about a third of the way through the cupcake.
- 6 Spoon about 1 tsp of lemon curd into the hole in each cake. Replace the tops.
- 7 For the meringue, whisk the egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add the sugar, whisking continuously, until stiff peaks form and the mixture is thick and glossy.
- 8 Heat the grill to its highest setting. Spoon the meringue over the cakes and form into spikes with a knife. Place the cupcakes under the grill for 2-3 minutes, until the meringue is tinged golden-brown.



## Gingerbread cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 250g (9oz) plain flour
- 225g (8oz) light brown sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- a pinch of grated nutmeg
- 2 free-range eggs
- 100ml (3½ fl oz) clear honey

- 110g (4oz) butter, melted
- 170ml (6 fl oz) hot water
- 2 tbsp chopped stem ginger

### FOR THE LEMON CREAM

- 225g (8oz) unsalted butter
- 400g (14oz) icing sugar
- juice of 1 lemon

### TO DECORATE

- 12 slices mandarin orange

- 1 For the cupcakes, heat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Sift the flour, sugar, baking powder and spices into a mixing bowl.
- 3 Beat together the eggs, honey and butter until smooth. Stir into the dry ingredients.
- 4 Add the water and chopped ginger and stir well until combined.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the lemon cream, beat the butter until very soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar, beating until smooth. Add the lemon juice, slowly, beating constantly until blended.
- 7 Spoon on top of the cakes and place a mandarin slice on top.



## Peanut butter cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 75g (2½oz) unsalted butter
- 100g (3½oz) peanut butter
- 175g (6oz) caster sugar
- 3 free-range eggs
- 75ml (2½fl oz) plain yoghurt
- 75ml (2½fl oz) milk
- 100g (3½oz) chopped roasted peanuts
- 175g (6oz) plain flour
- 2 tsp baking powder

### FOR THE PEANUT BUTTERCREAM

- 110g (4oz) butter
- 185g (6½oz) smooth peanut butter
- 300g (11oz) icing sugar
- a pinch of salt
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 2-3 tbsp double cream

### TO DECORATE

- 4-5 tbsp seedless strawberry or raspberry jam
- chopped roasted peanuts

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Mix together the butter, peanut butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until smooth, then beat in the eggs.
- 3 Beat in the yoghurt and milk, then stir in the peanuts.
- 4 Sift in the flour and baking powder and stir gently until just combined.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the peanut buttercream, beat the butter and peanut butter with an electric whisk until smooth. Sift in the icing sugar and salt and beat at low speed until just blended. Whisk in the vanilla and cream until light and fluffy.
- 7 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a lattice pattern on top of the cakes. Spoon a little jam in the lattice spaces and sprinkle with chopped peanuts.





## Custard cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 150g (5oz) butter**
- 150g (5oz) caster sugar**
- 3 free-range eggs, beaten**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- 150g (5oz) self-raising flour**
- 1 tbsp milk**
- 120g (4oz) thick custard**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2** Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs and vanilla until blended.
- 3** Sift in the flour and gently stir into the mixture with the milk, until they are combined.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases to three-quarters fill them.
- 5** Spoon the custard into a piping bag and pipe into the centre of the mixture, but not touching the bottom of the paper case.
- 6** Bake for 18-20 minutes until risen and golden. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.



## Carrot and mascarpone cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 2 free-range eggs**
- 175g (6oz) caster sugar**
- 150ml (5fl oz) sunflower oil**
- 200g (7oz) self-raising flour**
- 2 tsp mixed spice**
- 2 carrots, grated**
- 2 tbsp sultanas**
- finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed orange**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**

### FOR THE CREAM

- 175g (6oz) unsalted butter**
- 350g (12oz) icing sugar**
- 225g (8oz) mascarpone**
- TO DECORATE**
- finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed orange**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2** Whisk together the eggs, sugar and oil in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy.
- 3** Gently fold in the flour, spice, grated carrots, sultanas, orange zest and vanilla until thoroughly combined.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until well risen and golden brown. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** For the mascarpone cream, beat the butter until soft, then sift in the icing sugar. Beat well until smooth.
- 6** Gradually beat in the mascarpone until smooth and creamy. Chill for 30 minutes.
- 7** Spoon into a piping bag with a star or shell nozzle and pipe on top of the cakes. Sprinkle with orange zest.



## Honey cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 175ml (6fl oz) milk
- 80ml (3fl oz) sunflower oil
- 55ml (2fl oz) honey
- 2 tsp grated lemon zest
- 1 free-range egg
- 225g (8oz) plain flour
- 3 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- 50g (1¾oz) chocolate chips

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 300ml (11fl oz) double cream
- 1-2 tbsp icing sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

### TO DECORATE

honey

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat together the milk, sunflower oil, honey, lemon zest and egg in a mixing bowl.
- 3 Sift in the dry ingredients and mix until just combined. Stir in the chocolate chips.
- 4 Spoon into the tins and bake for 20-25 minutes until springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the topping, whisk together all the ingredients until thick.
- 6 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe on top of the cakes. Drizzle a little honey over the top.



## Maple syrup cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 180g (6oz) plain flour
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 5 tbsp butter
- 55g (2oz) sugar
- 50g (1¾oz) maple sugar or light brown sugar

1 large free-range egg

- 6 tbsp plain yoghurt
- 6 tbsp maple syrup
- 2 tbsp finely chopped walnuts

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 225g (8oz) unsalted butter
- 80g (3oz) icing sugar
- 225ml (8fl oz) maple syrup
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Grease 12 muffin cups or tins.
- 2 Stir together the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt and set aside.
- 3 Beat together the butter and both sugars in a mixing bowl until blended. Add the egg and beat well.
- 4 Whisk together the yoghurt and maple syrup.
- 5 Add half the dry ingredients to the butter mixture. Pour in a third of the yoghurt mixture. Add the remaining dry ingredients in two batches, alternating with the yoghurt mixture. Beat until just blended. Stir in the walnuts.
- 6 Pour into the cups and bake for about 20 minutes until golden brown. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 For the buttercream, whisk together all the ingredients until smooth. Chill for about 20 minutes, until firm enough to pipe.
- 8 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe on top of the cakes, as in the photo above.





## Advocaat cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 100g (3½oz) plain chocolate, grated**
- 100g (3½oz) butter**
- 75g (2½oz) sugar**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- a pinch of salt**
- 1 free-range egg**
- 200g (7oz) plain flour**
- 1 tsp baking powder**
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- 1 tbsp cocoa powder**
- 100ml (3½fl oz) milk**

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 110g (4oz) sugar**
- 2 large free-range egg whites**
- 180g (6oz) unsalted butter**
- 6 tbsp advocaat**

### TO DECORATE

- 300g (11oz) plain chocolate, melted**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in two 12-hole mini muffin tins.
- 2** Beat together the chocolate and butter in a mixing bowl until soft and creamy. Gradually beat in the sugar; vanilla and salt until smooth.
- 3** Beat in the egg until incorporated.
- 4** Gradually sift in the flour; baking powder; bicarbonate of soda and cocoa and fold in gently, alternating with the milk, until well blended.
- 5** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 10-15 minutes, until springy to the touch. Cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6** For the topping, put the sugar and egg whites in a large heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water and whisk constantly for about 3 minutes, until hot to the touch.
- 7** Pour the mixture into a bowl and whisk for about 4 minutes until cool and a thick shiny meringue.
- 8** Whisk in the butter; one tbsp at a time, until smooth. Whisk until thick and very smooth, then gradually fold in the advocaat until it is fully incorporated.
- 9** Spoon into a piping bag and pipe on top of each cake.
- 10** Spoon melted chocolate over the top and leave to set.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

## Caramel butter cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 225g (8oz) plain flour
- 110g (4oz) light brown sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- a pinch of salt
- 1 free-range egg, beaten
- 150ml (5fl oz) milk
- 55ml (2fl oz) sunflower oil
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 170g (6oz) unsalted butter
- 200g (7oz) icing sugar
- 100g (3½oz) Demerara sugar
- 3 tbsp water
- 60ml (2fl oz) double cream
- 1 tbsp golden syrup

### FOR THE CARAMEL SAUCE

- 250g (9oz) caster sugar
- 4 tbsp water
- 150ml (5fl oz) double cream
- 50g (1½oz) butter

### TO DECORATE

- 12 small pieces of toffee

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Sift the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt into a mixing bowl.
- 3 Whisk together the egg, milk, oil and vanilla. Stir into the dry ingredients until combined. Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the buttercream, beat the butter until very soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth. Heat the Demerara sugar and water in a pan over a medium heat, stirring once, until the sugar has dissolved. Continue cooking, but do not stir, until the sugar turns golden amber. Remove from the heat.
- 5 Slowly pour the cream and syrup into the pan – it will spatter. Heat gently, stirring until combined. Simmer gently until thickened, then remove from the heat and cool to lukewarm.
- 6 Whisk the warm mixture into the buttercream until smooth.
- 7 Spoon into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe onto the cakes.
- 8 For the caramel sauce, put the sugar into a heavy-based frying pan and stir in the water. Heat gently, tilting the pan, (do not stir or the sugar will crystallise) until the sugar has dissolved.
- 9 Increase the heat and bubble for 4-5 minutes until golden brown. Remove from the heat, and carefully stir in the cream and butter. Pour into a jug or bowl and leave to cool.
- 10 Drizzle the sauce over the cakes and top with a toffee piece.





## Gin and passion fruit cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**185g (6½oz) unsalted butter**

**175g (6oz) sugar**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

**3 free-range eggs**

**125g (4½oz) mascarpone**

**125g (4½oz) self-raising flour**

**30g (1oz) plain flour**

**60ml (2fl oz) milk**

**60ml (2fl oz) passion fruit pulp**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**250g (9oz) unsalted butter**

**500g (18oz) icing sugar**

**juice of 1 lime**

**4 tbsp gin**

### TO DECORATE

**pulp and seeds of 3-4 passion fruit**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Beat the butter, sugar and vanilla in a mixing bowl, until light and creamy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add the mascarpone and the passion fruit pulp and beat until smooth.
- 3** Stir in both flours alternately with the milk until smooth.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** For the topping, beat the butter until soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth.
- 6** Gradually beat in the lime juice and gin. Beat until soft and light.
- 7** Spoon into a piping bag and pipe swirls on top of each cake.
- 8** Place a little passion fruit pulp on top of each cake.



Recipe © Stockfood photography © www.photocuisine.co.uk

## Aniseed toffee cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

110g (4oz) sugar  
100g (3½oz) plain flour  
35g (1¼oz) cocoa powder  
¾ tsp baking powder  
¾ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
¼ tsp salt  
1 tsp ground anise  
1 free-range egg  
110ml (4fl oz) milk  
110ml (4fl oz) sunflower oil  
110ml (4fl oz) boiling water

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

100g (3½oz) Demerara sugar  
3 tbsp water  
60ml (2fl oz) double cream  
1 tbsp black treacle (molasses)  
30g (1oz) soft black liquorice, chopped  
170g (6oz) unsalted butter  
200g (7oz) icing sugar

### TO DECORATE

12 chocolate squares

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Stir together the dry ingredients. Set aside.
- 3 Whisk together the egg, milk and oil until smooth.
- 4 Gradually add the flour mixture until fully incorporated. Add the boiling water and mix until smooth.
- 5 Pour into the paper cases and bake for 15-20 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the buttercream, dissolve the sugar in the water in a pan over a low heat, then increase the heat and bring to a boil. Cook for a few minutes, until thickened and a rich, caramel colour.
- 7 Remove from the heat and carefully add the cream and treacle. Stir well, then return to the heat with the liquorice and bring to a boil.
- 8 Reduce the heat to very low, stirring constantly and continue to cook until the mixture thickens. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool to lukewarm.
- 9 Beat the butter until very soft. Gradually sift in the icing sugar and beat well.
- 10 Whisk in the warm liquorice mixture until smooth. Chill until firm enough to pipe.
- 11 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe on top of each cake. Decorate with a chocolate square.

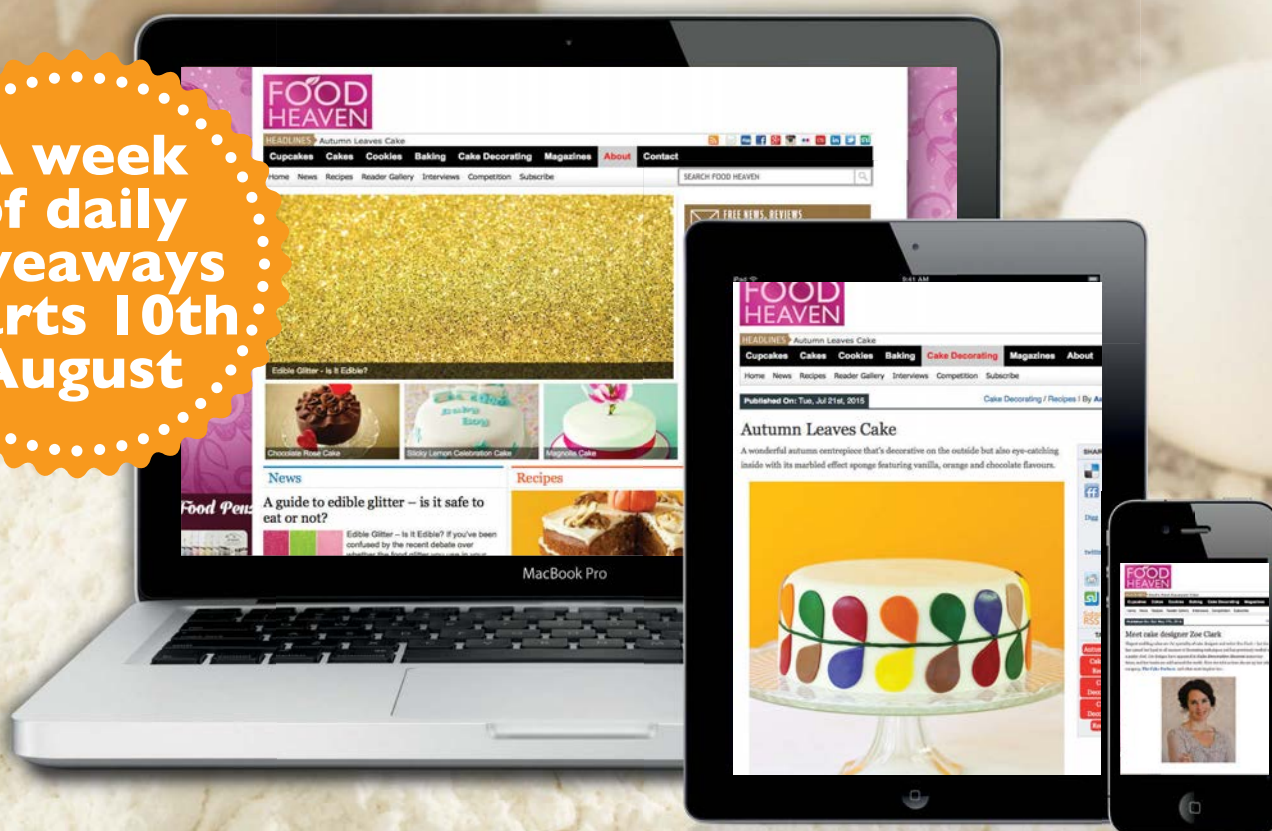


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# Queen *of the* Cupcake Wars

Alison Riede won the Food Network's 2011 *Cupcake Wars* show and she's sharing some favourite dessert-inspired bakes with us...

As I quickly discovered when I competed on – and won – the *Cupcake Wars* show, the world of cupcake flavours has moved well beyond vanilla with rainbow sprinkles! The cupcake world is heading in another, more mature direction: savoury and sometimes boozy cupcakes.

Many people are thrown off when they hear some of my cupcake flavours, such as Sharp Cheddar, Rosemary Parmesan and even Chicken 'n' Waffle. Being on *Cupcake Wars* forced me to think outside the box, because I had to find a way to stand apart and win. I've started using different herbs, cheeses, wines, beers and even vegetables in my cupcakes.

My Cucumber Mint Cupcake is one of my absolute favourites – it's refreshing, light, and has a subtle sweetness. I have personally experienced the flavour evolution of cupcakes, from being very cutesy and girly, to becoming

more sophisticated and elevated. In fact, I've started pairing my cupcakes with wine at a local tasting room called Corks n' Crowns in Santa Barbara, California and the response has been incredible.

It has been a perfect testing ground for new cupcake

recipes, and I've discovered that people are curious to try unlikely flavours, partly to say they've tried them!

I don't know about you, but if something is new and exclusive, I want to try it. That's why I like to experiment with savoury flavours, not only are they unexpected, but they

are surprisingly delicious. Some people will say they aren't 'dessert people', but the combination of lightly sweet and savoury flavours will open their minds to the idea of dessert. Here I show you how to make something different with your cupcakes, by taking some favourite puddings and adapting them to create delicious cupcakes with the 'wow' factor:

*I've started using different herbs, cheeses, wines, beers and even vegetables in my cupcakes. Cucumber mint is an absolute favourite.*



# Mimosa cheesecake cupcakes with orange champagne frosting

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

175g (6oz) vanilla wafers,  
about 35-40  
60g (2oz) butter  
700g (1lb 8oz) cream cheese  
230g (8oz) granulated sugar  
2 large free-range eggs  
2 tsp pure orange extract

## FOR THE ORANGE CHAMPAGNE FROSTING

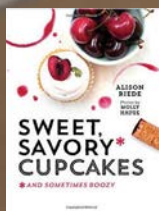
115g (4oz) butter, softened  
1 tsp pure orange extract  
4 tbsp dry Champagne  
700g (1lb 8oz) icing sugar  
grated zest of 1 orange,  
to garnish

- 1 Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Line a standard cupcake tin with 12 paper liners.
- 2 In a blender or food processor, pulse together the vanilla wafers until they resemble fine sand. Transfer the wafer crumbs to a medium bowl and set aside.
- 3 In a separate, small bowl, melt the butter in the microwave until it is completely liquid.
- 4 Pour the butter into the vanilla wafer crumbs and mix well with a fork, until the mixture is thoroughly combined.
- 5 Press one rounded tbsp of the wafer mixture into the bottom of each cupcake liner.
- 6 Using a stand or hand mixer on the lowest speed, beat together the cream cheese and sugar until smooth.

- 7 Beat in one egg at a time, increasing the speed to high after the last egg is added. Beat for about 3 minutes, until the batter is smooth.
- 8 Lowering the speed to low, add the orange extract and mix for 30 seconds.
- 9 Fill the cupcake liners all the way to the top – they will hardly rise at all during baking.
- 10 Bake for 25 minutes, or until the cheesecake starts to crack on the top, and the edges are slightly golden. Remove from the oven and chill in the refrigerator for 20 minutes, or until firm. While the cupcakes are chilling, prepare the frosting.

## TO MAKE THE ORANGE CHAMPAGNE FROSTING

- 1 With a hand or stand mixer, beat the softened butter and orange extract together on medium speed for 2 minutes.
- 2 Slowly add 2 tbsp of the dry Champagne, and then add 450g (1lb) of the icing sugar and beat on low for 1 minute. Add the remaining Champagne and icing sugar alternately until everything is combined.
- 3 Gradually increase the mixer speed to high and beat for 3 minutes, until fluffy.
- 4 Gently pipe each cupcake with frosting. Garnish with a sprinkle of grated orange zest on each cupcake.



The recipes on pages 79-81 are taken from *Sweet, Savory And Sometimes Boozy Cupcakes* by Alison Riede, photography by Molly Hauge, published by Countryman Press. RRP £12.51.





## Chocolate chip waffle cupcakes

Makes 15

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

230g (8oz) granulated sugar  
170g (6oz) butter, softened  
2 free-range eggs  
1 tsp pure vanilla extract  
2 tsp pure maple extract  
60ml (2fl oz) whole milk  
115ml (4oz) sour cream  
170g (6oz) plain flour  
115g (4oz) self-raising flour  
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
¼ tsp salt  
230g (8oz) mini chocolate chips

### FOR THE FROSTING

115g (4oz) butter, softened  
115g (4oz) cream cheese  
½ tsp pure maple extract  
450g (1lb) icing sugar  
2 tbsp pure maple syrup

### FOR THE TOPPING

1 tbsp granulated sugar  
60ml (2fl oz) vegetable oil  
1 free-range egg  
230ml (8fl oz) buttermilk  
1 tsp pure vanilla extract  
230g (8oz) flour  
2 tsp baking powder  
½ tsp salt  
150g (5½oz) mini chocolate chips  
cooking spray

- 1 Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Line two standard cupcake tins with 15 paper liners.
- 2 Using a stand or hand mixer, cream together the sugar and butter on medium speed in a large bowl.
- 3 Slowly add in the eggs, one at a time, and mix on medium speed until they are combined.
- 4 Reduce speed to low and add the vanilla extract, maple extract, milk and sour cream.
- 5 In a separate bowl, combine both flours, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Slowly add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and mix on medium speed until smooth, about 2 minutes.
- 6 Using a spatula, fold in the mini chocolate chips.
- 7 Using a large spoon, fill the cupcake liners three-quarters full and bake for 18-20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Let cool for 20 minutes.

### TO MAKE THE MAPLE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

- 1 With a hand or stand mixer, beat the softened butter and cream cheese together on medium speed for 3 minutes.
- 2 Add the maple extract and beat on medium speed for 1 minute.
- 3 Slowly add the icing sugar and beat on low for 1 minute.
- 4 Add the maple syrup and gradually increase the speed to high and beat for 3 minutes, until fluffy.

### TO MAKE THE BUTTERMILK WAFFLE TOPPING

- 1 Preheat a waffle iron on medium heat.
- 2 Using a stand or hand mixer, cream together the sugar and oil on medium speed in a large bowl.
- 3 Add in the egg and mix on medium speed until combined.
- 4 Reduce speed to low and add the buttermilk and vanilla extract.
- 5 In a separate bowl, combine the flour, baking powder and salt. Slowly add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, and mix on medium speed until smooth, about 2 minutes.
- 6 Using a spatula, fold in the mini chocolate chips.
- 7 Spray the waffle iron with cooking spray.
- 8 Spoon a third of a cup of waffle batter into the waffle iron and let it cook for 5-8 minutes, checking every 3 minutes. The waffle will be done when it's slightly golden and pulls off the iron easily.
- 9 Spray the waffle iron with cooking spray before making each waffle and repeat until all the batter is gone.
- 10 Cut the waffles into 5x5cm (2x2in) pieces.
- 11 Gently pipe each cupcake with the maple cream cheese frosting. Garnish with a buttermilk waffle topping piece on each cupcake. If desired, drizzle cupcakes with pure maple syrup.



# Pumpkin bread pudding cupcakes

Makes 20

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

230g (8oz) granulated sugar  
230g (8oz) butter, softened  
2 free-range eggs  
2 free-range egg yolks  
350g (12oz) pumpkin purée  
450g (1lb) self-raising flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
½ tsp salt  
2 tsp pumpkin pie spice  
½ tsp cinnamon  
230g (8oz) chopped pecans

## FOR THE CARAMEL SAUCE

115g (4oz) butter  
115g (4oz) white sugar  
115g (4oz) brown sugar  
230ml (8fl oz) double cream  
1 tsp sea salt

## FOR THE CARAMEL FROSTING

170g (6oz) butter, softened  
170ml (6fl oz) caramel sauce  
1kg (2lb 4oz) icing sugar  
½ tsp sea salt  
60g (2oz) pecan pieces, to garnish

- 1 Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Line two standard cupcake tins with 20 paper liners.
- 2 Using a stand or hand mixer, cream together the sugar and butter on medium speed in a large bowl.
- 3 Slowly add in the eggs, one at a time, and mix on medium speed until they are combined.
- 4 Reduce speed to low and add the pumpkin purée.
- 5 In a separate bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, salt, pumpkin pie spice and cinnamon. Slowly add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, and mix on medium speed until smooth, about 2 minutes.
- 6 With a spatula, gently fold in the pecan pieces.
- 7 Using a large spoon, fill the cupcake liners three-quarters full and bake for 18-20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Let cool for 20 minutes.

## TO MAKE THE CARAMEL SAUCE

- 1 In a medium saucepan, slowly melt the butter over a low heat.
- 2 Stir in the white and brown sugar until they are dissolved, about 1 minute.
- 3 Add the double cream and salt and stir over medium heat, whisking constantly, for about 3-4 minutes.
- 4 Take off the heat and pour into a mason jar. Put directly into the fridge to cool for 30 minutes.

## TO MAKE THE SALTED CARAMEL FROSTING

- 1 With a hand or stand mixer, beat the softened butter and 170ml (6fl oz) of the caramel sauce together on medium speed for 2 minutes.
- 2 Slowly add the icing sugar and beat on low for 2 minutes.
- 3 Add the salt and gradually increase the speed to high and beat for 3 minutes, until fluffy.

## TO ASSEMBLE

- 1 Using an apple corer or a circle pastry tip, poke a quarter-sized hole in each cupcake and remove a small amount of cake inside. Spoon half a tablespoon of caramel sauce into each cupcake. Gently pipe each cupcake with salted caramel frosting. Garnish with a sprinkle of pecan pieces on each cupcake.





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# Fruit & Nut

CUPCAKES





## Blackberry nests

By Stork ([www.bakewithstork.com](http://www.bakewithstork.com))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 165g (5¾oz) Stork tub**
- 165g (5¾oz) caster sugar**
- 3 large free-range eggs**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- 165g (5¾oz) self-raising flour**
- 2 tbsp milk**
- 120g (4¼oz) blackberries (frozen or fresh)**

### FOR THE NESTS

- 100g (3½oz) Shredded Wheat**
- 125g (4½oz) milk chocolate, melted**

### FOR THE FILLING

- 90ml (3¼ fl oz) double cream, softly whipped**
- 100g (3½oz) blackberries**
- 20g (¾oz) grated white chocolate**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a muffin tin with cupcake cases.
- 2** In a large bowl, beat together the Stork, sugar, eggs, vanilla, self-raising flour and milk until evenly combined.
- 3** Fold through the blackberries.
- 4** Divide the mixture between the cupcake cases and bake in the oven for 25 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Transfer to a wire rack and allow to cool completely.
- 5** Melt the milk chocolate in a water bath.
- 6** Crumble the Shredded Wheat into a bowl and pour over the melted milk chocolate. Stir well to combine.
- 7** Spoon the mixture onto the tops of the cupcakes to form the nests.
- 8** Softly whip the double cream and add a teaspoon to the centre of each nest.
- 9** Top with the fresh blackberries and grated white chocolate.

## Coconut and lime nests

By Stork ([www.bakewithstork.com](http://www.bakewithstork.com))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 165g (5¾oz) Stork tub**
- 165g (5¾oz) caster sugar**
- 3 large free-range eggs**
- 165g (5¾oz) self-raising flour**
- 50g (1¾oz) desiccated coconut**
- grated zest and juice of 1 lime**
- 2 tbsp milk**

### FOR THE NESTS

- 80g (3oz) cornflakes**
- 25g (1oz) desiccated coconut**
- 125g (4½oz) white chocolate, melted**

### FOR THE FILLING

- green jelly beans**
- shards of toasted coconut**
- grated zest of 1 lime**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a muffin tin with cupcake cases.
- 2** In a large bowl, beat together the Stork, sugar, eggs, flour, coconut, lime zest and juice and milk until evenly combined.
- 3** Divide the mixture between the cupcake cases and bake in the oven for 25 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Move to a wire rack and allow to cool completely.
- 4** In a bowl, combine the cornflakes and coconut. Add the melted white chocolate and stir well.
- 5** Top each cupcake with the mixture to form the nests.
- 6** Fill with green jelly beans, top with the toasted shards of coconut and sprinkle with lime zest.





# Lime mascarpone cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

175g (6oz) butter

175g (6oz) caster sugar

3 free-range eggs, beaten

175g (6oz) self-raising flour

a pinch of salt

finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed lime

## FOR THE TOPPING

300g (11oz) mascarpone

110g (4oz) plain yoghurt

1-2 tbsp honey

## TO DECORATE

grated lime zest

lime leaves

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat together the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until pale and fluffy.
- 3 Gradually beat in the eggs, beating until fully incorporated into the mixture. Fold in the flour, salt and lime zest until blended.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases. Bake for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown and springy to the touch. Leave to cool in the tins for about 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the topping, whisk together all the ingredients until thick and smooth. Chill until firm enough to pipe.
- 6 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on each cake. Sprinkle with lime zest and decorate with lime leaves.



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# Blackberry frosting cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

175g (6oz) plain flour

2 tsp baking powder

110g (4oz) sugar

110g (4oz) butter, melted

1 free-range egg

120ml (4fl oz) milk

200g (7oz) blackberries

## FOR THE ICING

250g (9oz) icing sugar

1 tbsp lemon juice

1-2 tsp water

a few drops of lilac food colouring

## TO DECORATE

lilac sparkling sugar

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Sift the flour and baking powder into a mixing bowl and stir in the sugar.
- 3 Beat together the melted butter, egg and milk until smooth, then gradually stir into the dry ingredients until just mixed, but still slightly lumpy. Gently stir in the blackberries.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until risen and golden. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl and gradually stir in the lemon juice and water until the mixture is smooth and thick.
- 6 Spoon 4-5 tbsp of icing into a small bowl and stir in the food colouring.
- 7 Spoon the white icing on top of each cake, then top with some lilac icing and swirl lightly with a cocktail stick or skewer. Sprinkle with sparkling sugar. Leave to set.



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# Fruit & Nut CUPCAKES



## Pear and chestnut cream cupcakes

Makes 11

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 300g (11 oz) self-raising flour**
- 1 tsp baking powder**
- a pinch of salt**
- 85g (3oz) caster sugar**
- 250ml (9fl oz) milk**
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten**
- 100g (3½oz) butter, melted**
- 2 pears, peeled, cored and chopped**

### FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 115g (4oz) chestnut paste or chestnut cream**
- 115g (4oz) unsweetened chestnut purée**
- 225g (8oz) unsalted butter**
- 115g (4oz) icing sugar**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Grease 12 muffin cups.
- 2** Sift the flour, baking powder and salt into a mixing bowl, then stir in the sugar.
- 3** Mix together the milk, eggs and melted butter and pour into the dry ingredients. Stir until just beginning to combine – the mixture should be lumpy.
- 4** Spoon some of the mixture into a muffin cup. Stir half the pears into the remaining mixture and divide between the remaining 11 muffin cups.
- 5** Spoon the remaining pears on top of the pear mixture and bake for 15-20 minutes, until golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6** For the chestnut buttercream, beat together the chestnut paste and chestnut purée until smooth. Add the butter and beat again.
- 7** Sift in the icing sugar and add the vanilla extract. Beat well until smooth.
- 8** Spoon into a piping bag and pipe on top of each pear cake.
- 9** Crumble the plain cake and sprinkle on top of the chestnut cream.

## Blueberry cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 225g (8oz) plain flour**
- 2 tsp baking powder**
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar**
- 2 free-range eggs**
- 100ml (3½fl oz) sunflower oil**
- 225ml (8fl oz) milk**
- 55g (2oz) blueberries**

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 225g (8oz) butter**
- 3 tbsp crème fraîche**
- ½ tsp vanilla extract**
- 400g (14oz) icing sugar**
- a pinch of salt**
- 1 tbsp lemon juice**
- a few drops of lilac food colouring**
- blueberries and pink sugar stars**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Put paper cases in a 12-hole deep muffin tin.
- 2** Sift the flour and baking powder into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar. Whisk the eggs and oil until frothy, then slowly whisk in the milk. Stir into the dry ingredients until just blended. Gently stir in the blueberries.
- 3** Spoon into the cases and bake for about 20 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4** For the topping, beat the butter, crème fraîche and vanilla until creamy and pale.
- 5** Sift in the icing sugar and salt and beat until well combined. Add the lemon juice and food colouring and beat until smooth.
- 6** Spoon into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe on top of the cakes. Decorate with blueberries and sugar stars.





# Candied ginger cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

225g (8oz) butter

225g (8oz) caster sugar

225g (8oz) self-raising flour

4 free-range eggs

½ tsp baking powder

2 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp mixed spice

1 piece of stem (candied) ginger, finely chopped

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

175g (6oz) unsalted butter

350g (12oz) icing sugar

2-3 tsp ground ginger

## TO DECORATE

ginger syrup

12 pieces crystallised (candied) ginger

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Put the butter, sugar and flour in a mixing bowl. Add the eggs, baking powder and spices. Beat with an electric whisk until smooth and creamy. Stir in the stem ginger.
- 3 Spoon the mixture into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the ginger buttercream, beat the butter in a bowl until soft. Sift in the icing sugar and ginger and beat well.
- 5 Spread the ginger buttercream on top of the cakes. Drizzle with ginger syrup and place a piece of crystallised ginger on top of each cake.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

# Raspberry cupcakes with white chocolate cream

Makes 24

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

110g (4oz) butter

110g (4oz) caster sugar

2 free-range eggs, beaten

110g (4oz) self-raising flour

1 tsp vanilla extract

## FOR THE TOPPING

150g (5oz) white chocolate

250g (9oz) icing sugar

80g (3oz) unsalted butter

25ml (1 fl oz) cream

4 tbsp raspberries

## TO DECORATE

white chocolate buttons

raspberries

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in two 12-hole mini muffin tins.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs until well blended. Sift in the flour and fold in gently with the vanilla, until just combined.
- 3 Spoon the batter into the paper cases and bake for about 10 minutes, until golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the topping, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly.
- 5 Beat the butter and icing sugar until fluffy and pale, then beat in the cream and melted chocolate until smooth. Cool slightly.
- 6 Rub the raspberries through a sieve into the mixture and beat well.
- 7 Spread onto the cakes and press chocolate buttons around the sides. Place three raspberries on each cake.



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## Passion fruit cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 110g (4oz) butter
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- 110g (4oz) self-raising flour
- 1 passion fruit

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 100g (3½oz) white chocolate
- 140g (5oz) unsalted butter
- 140g (5oz) icing sugar
- 3 passion fruit

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease two 12-hole mini muffin tins.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs until well blended. Sift in the flour and fold in gently until just combined.
- 3 Using a teaspoon, scoop all the flesh, juice and seeds from the passion fruit into the mixture and gently stir until combined.
- 4 Spoon the mixture into the tins and bake for 10-15 minutes until golden and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack for the cakes to cool completely.
- 5 For the topping, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Leave to cool.
- 6 Beat together the butter and icing sugar in a bowl until smooth. Beat in the melted chocolate until smooth.
- 7 Using a teaspoon, scoop all the flesh, juice and seeds from the passion fruit into the mixture and gently stir until combined.
- 8 Spoon over the cakes and leave to set.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

## Pear and maple syrup cupcakes

Makes 20

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1 free-range egg
- 50g (1¾oz) sugar
- 110ml (4fl oz) milk
- 50g (1¾oz) butter, melted
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 150g (5oz) plain flour
- ½ tbsp baking powder
- a pinch of salt

### FOR THE FRUIT FOR THE CREAM

- |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 4 pears (peeled)         | 225g (8oz) sugar        |
| 450ml (16fl oz) red wine | 60ml (2fl oz) water     |
| 2 tbsp lemon juice       | ¼ tsp cream of tartar   |
| 2 tbsp orange juice      | 2 free-range egg whites |
| 100g (3½oz) blueberries  | 1 tsp vanilla extract   |
| 1½ tbsp maple syrup      |                         |

- 1 For the fruit, peel the pears. Place the pears, wine, lemon and orange juices in a pan just large enough to hold the pears and heat gently to a simmer. Cover and simmer gently for 20-30 minutes, until the pears are tender (the time depends on the pears'

ripeness). Remove the pears to a dish using a slotted spoon. Boil the remaining liquid in the pan until thick and syrupy. Remove from the heat and stir in the blueberries and maple syrup. Dice the pears and stir into the pan. Set aside to cool, then chill.

- 2 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper cases in 20 mini muffin tins. Mix together the egg, sugar, milk, butter and vanilla in a mixing bowl until combined. Sift in the flour, baking powder and salt and fold gently into the mixture until blended, but still slightly lumpy. Spoon into the cases and bake for 12-18 minutes until well risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool.
- 3 For the vanilla cream, heat the sugar, water and cream of tartar in a pan over a low heat until the sugar has dissolved completely. Bring to a boil and boil for 3 minutes until syrupy but not browned – 121°C on a sugar thermometer.
- 4 Whisk the egg whites and vanilla until holding soft peaks. Gradually pour in the hot syrup, in a thin, steady stream, whisking constantly for about 10 minutes until the mixture is stiff and cool.
- 5 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on each cake. Spoon the poached fruits on top.



# Orange mascarpone cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 175g (6oz) butter
- 175g (6oz) caster sugar
- finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed orange
- 3 free-range eggs, beaten
- 175g (6oz) self-raising flour
- a pinch of salt
- 1 tbsp orange juice

## FOR THE MASCARPONE CREAM

- 175g (6oz) unsalted butter
- 350g (12oz) icing sugar
- 225g (8oz) mascarpone

## TO DECORATE

- grated orange zest
- orange segments
- redcurrants

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat together the butter, sugar and orange zest in a mixing bowl until pale and fluffy.
- 3 Gradually beat in the eggs, beating until fully incorporated into the mixture. Fold in the flour, salt and orange juice until blended.
- 4 Spoon into the paper cases. Bake for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown and springy to the touch. Cool in the tins for 5 minutes. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 For the cream, beat the butter until soft, then sift in the sugar. Beat well until smooth. Gradually beat in the mascarpone until smooth and creamy. Chill for 30 minutes.
- 6 Spoon into a piping bag with a star or shell nozzle and pipe onto the cakes. Sprinkle with orange zest. Decorate with redcurrants and orange segments.



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

# Spice pear cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 110g (4oz) butter
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- 115g (4oz) self-raising flour
- a pinch of salt
- 1 tbsp finely chopped stem ginger

## FOR THE PEARS

- 3-4 firm pears, peeled, cored and diced
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 150g (5oz) sugar
- 2 tbsp water
- 2 tsp butter

## FOR THE TOPPING

- 200ml (7fl oz) whipping cream
- 1-2 tbsp icing sugar
- ground cinnamon

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2 Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until pale and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs, beating until fully incorporated. Fold in the flour, salt and ginger until blended.
- 3 Spoon the mixture into the cases. Bake for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4 For the pears, toss together the pears and lemon juice. Set aside. Stir together the sugar and water in a heavy frying pan over a low heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and cook for 4-5 minutes, swirling the pan, until the sugar turns lightly golden. Do not stir.
- 5 Remove from the heat and swirl in the butter. Add the pears, cover and cook over a low heat, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes, until the caramel has dissolved and the pears are translucent. Set aside to cool.
- 6 Spoon the pears on the cakes.
- 7 For the topping, whisk together the cream and sugar until thick. Spoon onto the cakes and sprinkle with ground cinnamon.



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## Chocolate and meringue cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 225g (8oz) plain flour**
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder**
- 1 tbsp baking powder**
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon**
- 110g (4oz) sugar**
- 2 free-range eggs**
- 100ml (3½fl oz) sunflower oil**
- 225ml (8fl oz) milk**

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 4-5 tbsp strawberry jam**
- 3 free-range egg whites**
- 175g (6oz) caster sugar**
- ¼ tsp cream of tartar**
- ½ tsp vanilla extract**

### TO DECORATE

**strawberry marshmallows**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Grease a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Sift the flour, cocoa, baking powder and cinnamon into a bowl. Stir in the sugar. Whisk together the eggs and oil until frothy, then slowly whisk in the milk. Stir into the dry ingredients until just blended. The mixture will be slightly lumpy. Spoon into the tin and bake for 20 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the tin.
- 3** For the topping, spread a little jam on each cake in the tin. Mix together the egg whites, sugar and cream of tartar in a heatproof bowl and place it in a pan of boiling water. Heat and whisk until the sugar has dissolved and a sugar thermometer reads 60°C.
- 4** Remove from the heat and use an electric whisk until stiff peaks form. Whisk in the vanilla. Chill for 10-15 minutes until firm enough to pipe. Heat the grill. Spoon the meringue into a piping bag and pipe onto the cakes. Place under the hot grill to brown the meringue. Alternatively, hold a kitchen blowtorch 10cm away from the meringue and brown evenly. Leave to cool.
- 5** Remove from the tins and decorate with strawberry marshmallows.

## Apple and cinnamon crumble cupcakes

By Sarah Sibley from Bake With Sarah ([www.bakewithsarah.com](http://www.bakewithsarah.com))

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 150g (5½oz) soft butter**
- 175g (6oz) caster sugar**
- 3 medium free-range eggs**
- 3 Granny Smith apples**
- 175g (6oz) self-raising flour**
- 2 tsp cinnamon**
- 100g (3½oz) Demerara sugar**
- 100g (3½oz) plain flour**
- 80g (2¾oz) unsalted butter, softened and cubed**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3. Line a muffin tin with 12 large muffin-sized cupcake cases.
- 2** Add the plain flour, 1 tsp of the cinnamon and the cubed, unsalted butter into a bowl and rub together with your fingertips until all the lumps are gone. Add the Demerara sugar, mix well and then put to one side.
- 3** Peel and finely dice the apples into 6-7mm pieces and put to one side.
- 4** Cream together the butter and sugar until pale and creamy. Slowly add the beaten eggs. Add the flour and cinnamon and mix thoroughly until smooth.
- 5** Carefully spoon the batter into the cases.
- 6** Get the apple pieces and evenly distribute them over the 12 cupcakes, placing the apple on top of the batter.
- 7** Top each cake with the crumble mix, spreading it right to the edges.
- 8** Bake for around 25 minutes or until the crumble is golden brown. Best served hot.



Recipe and photography by Sarah Sibley from Bake With Sarah ([www.bakewithsarah.com](http://www.bakewithsarah.com))



# Chocolate

CUPCAKES



## White chocolate and macadamia nut cupcakes

By Fergal Connolly and Judith Fertig

Makes 18

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**225g (8oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**225g (8oz) caster sugar**

**225g (8oz) self-raising flour**

**1 tsp baking powder**

**½ tsp salt**

**4 free-range eggs**

**1 tsp vanilla essence**

**100g (3½oz) white chocolate chips**

### FOR THE ICING

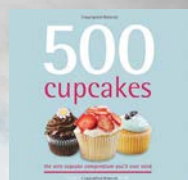
**200g (7oz) white chocolate chips**

**5 tbsp milk**

**175g (6oz) icing sugar, sieved**

**3 tbsp chopped, toasted macadamia nuts**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 175°C/Gas Mark 4. Place 18 paper baking cases in muffin tins.
- 2 Combine all the cupcake ingredients, except the chocolate chips, in a large bowl and beat with an electric whisk until smooth and pale, about 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the chocolate chips. Spoon the batter into the cases. Bake for 20 minutes.
- 3 Remove the tins from the oven and cool for 5 minutes. Then remove the cupcakes and cool on a rack.
- 4 To make the icing, melt the chocolate and milk in a medium bowl over a pan of simmering water, stirring frequently.
- 5 Remove from the heat and beat in the icing sugar until smooth. Spread over the cupcakes and sprinkle with the nuts.



This recipe and the mint chocolate cupcakes on page 93 are taken from *500 Cupcakes* by Fergal Connolly and Judith Fertig, published by Apple Press, RRP £9.99.





## Mint chocolate cupcakes

By Fergal Connolly and Judith Fertig

Makes 18

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**225g (8oz) self-raising flour**

**4 tbsp Dutch-process cocoa powder**

**1 tsp baking powder**

**225g (8oz) caster sugar**

**225g (8oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**4 free-range eggs**

**1 tsp mint essence**

**100g (3½oz) plain chocolate chips**

### FOR THE ICING

**115g (4oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**225g (8oz) icing sugar, sieved**

**1 tsp mint essence**

**green food colouring**

**100g (3½oz) plain chocolate chips**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3. Place 18 paper baking cases into muffin tins.
- 2 In a medium bowl, sieve together the flour, cocoa and baking powder. Set aside. Beat the sugar and butter together in a large bowl until smooth. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add the flour mixture gradually, stirring until well combined. Stir in the mint essence and chocolate chips. Spoon the mixture into the cases. Bake for 20 minutes.
- 3 Remove the tins from the oven and cool for 5 minutes. Then remove the cupcakes and cool on a rack.
- 4 To make the icing, beat the butter and icing sugar in a small bowl until smooth and creamy. Stir in the mint essence and just enough food colouring to turn the icing a mint green. Ice the cupcakes and decorate with chocolate chips.
- 5 Store without icing in an airtight container for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 3 months.



## Raspberry ganache cupcakes

Makes 18

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**400g (14oz) plain flour, plus extra for dusting**

**200g (7oz) butter**

**100g (3½oz) icing sugar**

**1 free-range egg yolk, beaten**

**1 tsp ground cinnamon**

**a pinch of salt**

### FOR THE GANACHE

**125ml (4½fl oz) double cream**

**250g (9oz) plain chocolate, chopped**

**2 tbsp rum**

**2 tbsp unsalted butter**

### TO DECORATE

**12 raspberries**

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease 12 deep bun tins.
- 2 Mix together the flour, icing sugar, cinnamon and salt in a mixing bowl. Rub in the butter with your fingertips until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.
- 3 Stir in enough egg yolk to form a dough. Knead quickly and form into a ball. Wrap the dough in clingfilm and chill for 30 minutes.
- 4 Roll out the dough on a floured surface about 5mm (¼in) thick. Cut out rounds larger than the diameter of the tins. Press into the tins and prick the bases with a fork.
- 5 Bake for 10–15 minutes until golden brown. Leave in the tins for a few minutes to firm, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the chocolate ganache, heat the cream in a pan and bring to a boil. Immediately remove from the heat and pour over the chocolate. Stir until the chocolate has melted, then stir in the rum.
- 7 Add the butter gradually and stir until blended. Cool until the mixture is thick enough to pipe.
- 8 Spoon the ganache into a piping bag and pipe into the pastry shells. Top each with a raspberry.

Recipe and photography © Stockfood

# Chocolate CUPCAKES



Recipe and photography © Stockfood

Recipe © Stockfood, photography © www.photocuisine.co.uk

## Chocolate marquise cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

150g (5oz) plain flour  
2 tbsp cocoa powder  
2 tsp baking powder  
¼ tsp salt  
1 large free-range egg, beaten  
45g (1½oz) caster sugar  
120ml (4fl oz) milk  
50g (1½oz) butter, melted and cooled

### FOR THE TOPPING

120g (4oz) plain chocolate, chopped  
150g (5oz) unsalted butter  
160g (6oz) icing sugar  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
**TO DECORATE**  
plain biscuits, broken

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Line two 12-hole mini muffin tins with paper cases.
- 2 Sift the flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt and set aside.
- 3 Mix together the egg, sugar, milk and melted butter in a mixing bowl until blended.
- 4 Sift in the dry ingredients and fold in until just combined.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 10 minutes, until springy to the touch. Cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the topping, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Set aside.
- 7 Beat the butter until very soft, then sift in the icing sugar and beat until smooth.
- 8 Beat in the chocolate and vanilla until smooth.
- 9 Spread the topping on the cakes and decorate with biscuits. Leave to set.

## Choco-banana cupcakes

Makes 24

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

175g (6oz) plain flour  
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
½ tsp baking powder  
a pinch of salt  
2 ripe bananas, mashed  
55g (2oz) sugar  
2½ tbsp melted butter  
½ free-range egg, beaten  
2 tbsp chocolate chips

### FOR THE TOPPING

150ml (5fl oz) double cream  
350g (12oz) plain chocolate, chopped  
55g (2oz) unsalted butter  
**TO DECORATE**  
1-2 bananas  
lemon juice

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in two 12-hole mini muffin tins.
- 2 Sift together the dry ingredients and set aside.
- 3 Mix together the bananas, butter and egg until smooth.
- 4 Add the flour mixture to the egg mixture and stir until combined. Stir in the chocolate chips.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 10-15 minutes, until golden brown. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the chocolate topping, heat the cream in a pan to a boil. Remove from the heat and add the chocolate. Leave to stand for 5 minutes, then stir until the chocolate has melted.
- 7 Add the butter and stir until the mixture is smooth and glossy. Cool, then chill until firm enough to pipe.
- 8 Put the mixture into a piping bag and pipe swirls on top of each of the cakes.
- 9 Slice the bananas and toss the slices in lemon juice. Place on top of the cakes.



# Chocolate cherry cupcakes

Makes 8

## FOR THE BASE

225g (8oz) sugar  
115g (4oz) plain flour  
2 tbsp cocoa powder  
50g (1½oz) butter  
112ml (4fl oz) water  
50ml (1¾fl oz) sunflower oil  
1 free-range egg  
50ml (1¾fl oz) buttermilk  
¾ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
½ tsp vanilla extract

## FOR THE TOPPING

225ml (8fl oz) water  
225g (8oz) sugar  
2 cinnamon sticks, broken  
600g (21oz) cherries, pitted  
juice of ½ a lemon

## FOR THE MOUSSE

325g (11oz) plain chocolate  
80g (3oz) unsalted butter, melted  
4 free-range eggs, separated  
225ml (8fl oz) double cream

## TO DECORATE

white chocolate shavings and chocolate sticks

- 1 For the base, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease a 25x38cm (10x15in) rectangular baking tin.
- 2 Combine the sugar, flour and cocoa in a mixing bowl.
- 3 Heat together the butter, water and oil in a pan and bring to a boil.
- 4 Remove from the heat and pour over the dry ingredients, mixing well. Add the egg, buttermilk, bicarbonate of soda and vanilla and mix thoroughly.
- 5 Pour into the tin and bake for about 10 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tin.
- 6 Cut 8 rounds from the cake using a ring tin or mould.
- 7 Put the empty moulds on a tray and line with non-stick baking paper inside each ring, letting the paper come above the rings and securing with string or an elastic band.
- 8 For the topping, halve some of the cherries and leave 8-10 whole for the decoration.
- 9 Heat together the water, sugar and cinnamon sticks in a pan and stir over a low heat until the sugar has dissolved. Bring to a boil and boil for 5 minutes.
- 10 Add the cherries and lemon juice and cook for another 2 minutes. Remove the cinnamon sticks. Cool, then chill.
- 11 For the mousse, melt the chocolate and butter in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Immediately beat in the egg yolks, then remove from the heat and leave to cool.
- 12 Whisk the egg whites until stiff. Whisk the cream until thick. Gradually fold in the egg whites until combined.
- 13 Fold the cream mixture into the cooled chocolate mixture and cool, but do not chill.
- 14 Put a cake round inside each lined mould. Spoon some of the cherries and juice on top.
- 15 Spoon the mousse on top of the cake rounds and chill for at least 6 hours until set.
- 16 Remove from the moulds and place on serving plates.
- 17 Spoon the remaining cherries on top and around the cakes. Decorate with white chocolate shavings and chocolate sticks. Place a reserved cherry on top.





# Chocolate CUPCAKES



## Chocolate almond cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 200g (7oz) plain flour
- 25g (1oz) cocoa powder
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 110g (4oz) sugar
- 2 free-range eggs
- 100ml (3½fl oz) sunflower oil
- 225ml (8fl oz) milk
- 100g (3½oz) crunchy almond chocolate bar, chopped

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 250ml (9fl oz) double cream
- 1-2 tbsp icing sugar

### TO DECORATE

toasted flaked almonds

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Grease 12 muffin cups.
- 2 Sift the flour, cocoa and baking powder into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar.
- 3 Whisk together the eggs and oil in a separate bowl until frothy, then slowly whisk in the milk.
- 4 Stir into the dry ingredients until just blended, then stir in the chopped chocolate.
- 5 Spoon into the paper cases and bake for about 20 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the topping, whisk together the double cream and icing sugar until thick.
- 7 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on each cake. Sprinkle with toasted flaked almonds.

## White chocolate cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 3 free-range eggs
- 150g (5oz) caster sugar
- 150ml (5fl oz) milk
- 300g (11oz) plain flour
- 3 tsp baking powder
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder

### FOR THE CHOCOLATE CREAM

- 150g (5oz) white chocolate
- 250g (9oz) icing sugar
- 80g (3oz) unsalted butter
- 25ml (1fl oz) milk

### TO DECORATE

white chocolate mendiants  
(fruit and nut discs)

- 1 For the cupcakes, heat a steamer.
- 2 Whisk together the eggs and sugar in a mixing bowl, until doubled in volume.
- 3 Add the milk and fold in with the flour and baking powder, until they are combined.
- 4 Put about a third of the mixture into another bowl and sift in the cocoa powder. Stir to combine.
- 5 Divide the plain mixture between 12 baking cases. Dot with the cocoa mixture.
- 6 Put into the top of the steamer and steam over a medium-low heat for 10-15 minutes until cooked through. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 For the white chocolate cream, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly.
- 8 Beat the butter and icing sugar until fluffy and pale, then beat in the milk and melted chocolate until smooth.
- 9 Spoon into a piping bag and pipe a swirl on each cake. Top with a white chocolate mendant.





Recipe © Stockfood, photography © www.photocuisine.co.uk

## Chocolate, caramel, pistachio and marshmallow cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

200g (7oz) plain flour  
25g (1oz) cocoa powder  
1 tbsp baking powder  
110g (4oz) sugar  
2 free-range eggs  
100ml (3½fl oz) sunflower oil  
225ml (8fl oz) milk

### FOR THE FILLING

180ml (6fl oz) whipping cream  
125g (4½oz) plain chocolate, chopped  
25g (1oz) cocoa powder

### TO DECORATE

250g (9oz) plain chocolate  
50g (1¾oz) unsalted butter  
3 tbsp double cream  
3 tsp golden syrup  
chopped toffee  
mini marshmallows  
chopped pistachio nuts

- 1 For the filling, heat the cream to a boil in a pan and immediately pour over the chocolate. Stir and gradually add the cocoa powder and whisk vigorously until smooth. Cool, then chill until cold.
- 2 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Grease 12 muffin cups.
- 3 Sift the flour, cocoa and baking powder into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar.
- 4 Whisk together the eggs and oil until frothy, then slowly whisk in the milk.
- 5 Stir into the dry ingredients until just blended.
- 6 Spoon half the mixture into the paper cases. Place a small spoonful of the chilled filling on top and then cover completely with the remaining mixture.
- 7 Bake for 15-20 minutes until risen and springy to the touch. Place on a wire rack to cool.
- 8 To decorate, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat and stir in the butter, golden syrup and cream.
- 9 Drizzle the sauce over the cakes and sprinkle with chopped toffee, mini marshmallows and pistachios.



## IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

# Stefani Pollack

A money-saving offer to friends to bake cupcakes for their wedding led Stefani to blogging about recipes and to create the Cupcake Project...

### Q How did you first become interested in cupcakes and baking?

My mom was always a from-scratch baker and I loved baking with her. I adore the magical transformation that happens to batter in the oven.

### Q When and why did you decide to get the Cupcake Project started?

I started the blog in 2007 when two of my good friends were getting married and wanted cupcakes at their wedding. We all know how expensive cupcakes can be, so I offered to bake their cupcakes for them to save them money. Having never baked cupcakes before,

### Q What type of response have you had to setting up the Cupcake Project?

People have enjoyed following my kitchen experiments. I have been told that I've inspired them to be creative in their own kitchens and even to start their own bakeries.

### Q What are your top tips for baking perfect cupcakes?

Don't worry about baking perfect cupcakes! Have fun and play with ideas and ingredients that you love. Your cupcakes are bound to taste great, and if they aren't as pretty as you hoped they would be, you can always cover them with frosting!

*If it is baked in a cup and looks like a cupcake, I'm going to call it a cupcake. You can't stop me!*

I thought they would turn down my offer. But they said, "Yes!" For the nine months leading up to their wedding, I baked them a different cupcake every week. I started the blog to keep track of all the cupcake recipes.

### Q How do you go about developing new recipes for cupcakes?

I start with tried and true recipes and play with ways to make my recipes different and better.

### Q How do you come up with new flavour combos?

I get inspiration in the meals I eat at local restaurants and in my travels. I get inspiration from the food that I grow in my garden, from TV, novels, cookbooks and other bloggers – basically, everywhere I look!

### Q What's the key to making good frosting?

Start with quality ingredients – using real butter and high quality chocolate makes a huge difference.

### Q What's your absolute favourite cupcake?

There is no one perfect cupcake, but my Ultimate Vanilla Cupcakes sure come close. They are moist and have a nice dome and a cake that is far more than a frosting delivery mechanism. I developed the recipe with a team of 50 test bakers, and over 60% of them said it was the best vanilla cupcake they had ever eaten.

### Q What's the craziest cupcake you've ever created?

Crazy and successful – cupcakes baked in eggshells. Crazy and a total flop – corned beef and cabbage cupcakes.



### Q What do you enjoy most about baking cupcakes in particular?

Cupcakes are much more forgiving than cakes. Plus, if you eat one before bringing them to a party, no one will ever know!

### Q You push the boundaries of cupcakes quite a lot – in your eyes, when does a cupcake stop being a cupcake?

I don't get hung up on technicalities. If it is baked in a cup and looks like a cupcake (even if the frosting is really mashed potatoes), I'm going to call it a cupcake. You can't stop me!

### Q What do you have planned for the rest of the year?

You can expect new creative cupcake recipes as well as unique pies, cookies and frozen treats!

The recipes on pages 99-100 are from Stefani's [www.cupcakeproject.com](http://www.cupcakeproject.com) website, where you'll find lots of great recipes, tips and more.



## Cupcakes in eggshells

Makes 10 large egg cupcakes

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

9 large free-range eggs – 1 for the cake, 8 for the shells

115g (4oz) plain flour

¼ tsp baking powder

⅛ tsp bicarbonate of soda

a pinch of salt


115g (4oz) sugar

60g (2oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature

½ tsp lemon extract

60ml (2fl oz) sour cream

- 1 Carefully poke a small hole in the top of each egg. I found the easiest way was to use the tip of a corkscrew bottle opener.
- 2 Once you have poked a tiny hole, peel back the edges of the hole to expand it a bit. The holes need to be large enough to fit the tip of a piping bag inside. You can always make the hole larger when you are ready to pipe so err on the smaller side during this step.
- 3 Turn the egg upside-down and pour out the contents. Keep the contents of one egg separate to use in the cake recipe. If you plan on using the other eggs for baking, it might be helpful to store them in small plastic containers in groups of two, otherwise it will be hard for you to later tell how much of your big bowl is two eggs. I used the tip of a thermometer to help get all of the egg out of the shell.
- 4 Rinse the insides of the eggs out thoroughly over the sink. Then, immerse them in salt water for 30 minutes. It needs to be salt water in order for the eggs to sink. Rinse the eggshells in cold water and lay the eggs hole-side down on a paper towel to dry.
- 5 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 6 For the cake batter, mix the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt in a medium bowl and set aside. In a large bowl, mix one egg and sugar until light and creamy. Add the butter and lemon extract and mix until fully integrated. Mix in the dry ingredients until just combined. Add the sour cream and mix until smooth.
- 7 Place the prepared eggshells into a cupcake tin. Use aluminium foil to help them stand upright.
- 8 Load the batter into a piping bag fitted with a large round tip. Make sure that the tip can fit all of the way inside of the hole. If it can't, expand the hole a little bit at a time until it fits. Fill your eggs about three-quarters full with batter. This is the tricky part. If you underfill the eggs, you won't have a complete cake egg inside when you crack them after baking. If you overfill the eggs, cake will overflow out of the egg during baking. It looks ugly right after baking, but just remove the excess cake and clean the shell with a damp towel. I found that it was best to let the cake overflow out of the top of the egg and then simply pick it off (eat it) and clean the shell with a damp towel before serving.
- 9 Bake the eggs for 23 minutes. Let cool, crack and eat!



*My Grandmother's eyes filled with wonder when she realized it wasn't a hard-boiled egg, but a cake baked in a real egg shell.*



## Crème brûlée cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

12 cupcakes (see page 112 for recipe)

### FOR THE CRÈME BRÛLÉE

10 free-range egg yolks

950ml (1¾pints) double cream

230g (8oz) sugar

450g (12oz) pumpkin purée

1 tbsp pumpkin pie spice

fine maple sugar or granulated sugar, for brûléeing

- 1 Start by baking your favourite cupcake recipe.
- 2 Instead of frosting with a traditional frosting, bake and chill crème brûlée. I used super-easy to make pumpkin crème brûlée. Preheat the oven to 150°C/Gas Mark 2.
- 3 Whisk all ingredients together. Divide evenly between ramekins. Place the filled ramekins into a deep roasting pan or whatever pan you would use to make something like lasagna. Fill the pan with water to halfway up the dishes. Bake for 45-50 minutes or until the crème brûlée no longer jiggles when you move it.
- 4 Refrigerate the crème brûlée for at least three hours.
- 5 Spread the chilled crème brûlée over the cooled cupcakes.
- 6 Sprinkle with regular or maple sugar and brûlée with a culinary torch just before serving.

**TIP** You can mix any flavour of crème brûlée with any cupcake flavour to create your dream crème brûlée cupcakes.



Break through caramelised sugar to reveal a layer of sweet cream and fluffy cupcake below.



# Lighter bakes

CUPCAKES





## Gluten-free lemon and poppy seed cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 2 tbsp clear honey**
- 2 tbsp poppy seeds**
- juice of 2 lemons, plus the grated zest of 1 lemon**
- 110g (3½oz) unsalted butter, melted**
- 110g (3½oz) caster sugar**
- 2 free-range eggs**
- 175g (6oz) natural yoghurt**
- 350g (11½oz) self-raising gluten-free flour**
- 1 tsp gluten-free baking powder**
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cases.
- 2** Place the honey in a small saucepan over a medium heat and add the poppy seeds, the lemon zest and half of the lemon juice. Heat until the honey is melted, then take off the heat and pour into a bowl. Stir in the remaining lemon juice and leave to cool for about 1-2 minutes.
- 3** Whisk in the melted butter, sugar, eggs and yoghurt.
- 4** Sift the flour, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda into a large bowl and pour in the yoghurt mixture. Gently mix together until just combined – do not overmix.
- 5** Divide between the paper muffin cases and bake in the oven for 15-18 minutes, until golden. Cool on a wire rack.

**TIP** Resist the temptation to overmix the cupcakes. Too much stirring will result in dense cakes that don't rise as much as they should.



## Gluten-free mini chocolate meringues

Makes 6

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 3 free-range egg whites**
- 75g (3oz) golden caster sugar**
- 75g (3oz) light muscovado sugar**
- 75g (3oz) milk chocolate, grated**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 140°C/Gas Mark 1. Whisk the egg whites in a grease-free bowl until stiffly peaking. Whisk in the golden caster sugar 1 tbsp at a time, then whisk in the light muscovado sugar, also 1 tbsp at a time. Fold in the chocolate.
- 2** Line two baking sheets with non-stick baking paper. Drop teaspoonfuls of the meringue mixture onto the baking sheets.
- 3** Bake in the oven for 75 minutes, then turn off the heat and leave in the oven for another 30 minutes.



# Gluten-free almond angel cupcakes

Makes 6

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

4 free-range egg whites

3 tbsp granulated sugar

50g (2oz) ground almonds

a generous pinch of cream of tartar

15g (½oz) flaked almonds

1 tbsp sifted icing sugar, to dust (optional)

## FOR THE BERRIES WITH FROMAGE FRAIS

200g (7oz) fromage frais

2 tbsp clear honey or sifted icing sugar (optional)

400g (13oz) frozen mixed berry fruits, just thawed

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Brush six holes of a deep muffin tin with a little sunflower oil and line the bases with rounds of greaseproof paper.
- 2 Whisk the egg whites in a clean, dry bowl until stiff, moist peaks form. Whisk in the granulated sugar, a teaspoonful at a time, until it has all been added. Keep whisking for 1-2 minutes until thick and glossy.
- 3 Fold in the ground almonds and cream of tartar, then spoon the mixture into the prepared sections of the muffin tin. Sprinkle the flaked almonds over the top of each one. Bake in the oven for 10-12 minutes until golden brown and set. Carefully loosen the edges of the cakes with a knife, then lift onto a wire rack to cool.
- 4 Put the fromage frais in a bowl and stir through the honey or icing sugar to sweeten, if liked. Swirl the thawed berry fruits through the fromage frais. Arrange the angel cakes on a serving plate, dusted with the icing sugar, if liked. Serve with the swirled fruits and fromage frais for spooning over.

**TIP** A by-product of wine making – it is derived from the crystals that form inside wine barrels – cream of tartar is used in baking to add volume to beaten egg whites.



The recipes on pages 102-103 are taken from *The Gluten-Free Recipe Book*, published by Octopus, RRP £9.99.





## Vegan chocolate and banana cupcakes

By Jemma Lloyd from Iced Jems ([www.icedjems.com](http://www.icedjems.com))

Makes 12 (or 28 mini cupcakes)

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**50g (1½oz) cocoa powder (check it has no dairy in it)**

**120ml (4¼fl oz) boiling water**

**200g (7oz) caster sugar**

**1½ mashed bananas**

**150ml (5½fl oz) olive oil**

**150g (5½oz) plain flour**

**1½ tsp baking powder**

### FOR THE TOPPING

**175g (6oz) icing sugar**

**2 tbsp cocoa powder**

**cold water, to mix the icing**

**vegan chocolate buttons, to decorate (optional)**

**mini baking cups (£1.75 a pack at [www.icedjemsshop.com](http://www.icedjemsshop.com))**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 and place your baking cups onto a flat baking tray.
- 2** Start by mixing together your cocoa powder and boiling water into a thick paste in a small bowl.
- 3** In a separate large bowl, mash the bananas and mix with the olive oil and caster sugar.
- 4** You should have a thick yellow mixture that you can add your chocolate paste to.
- 5** The final ingredients to add are the flour and baking powder; mixing for a final time to give you a smooth chocolate cupcake batter.
- 6** Fill your baking cups with the chocolate cupcake batter; I filled mine about three-quarters of the way and they rose to a really nice height. If you wanted flat-topped cupcakes, try filling the cases to two-thirds full and baking on a lower heat.
- 7** Place in the oven and bake for about 12 minutes or until the cupcakes spring back softly when pressed.
- 8** Once baked, place the cupcakes onto a wire cooling rack and allow to completely cool – the domes may reduce in height as they cool.
- 9** To make the topping, sift the cocoa powder and icing sugar into a large bowl and add a teaspoon of water at a time, mixing into a thick paste. I used about 6 tsp of water in total, but you can mix to your desired consistency.
- 10** Drop the icing onto each cupcake and spread to the edges using the back of a teaspoon. Decorate with buttons, if desired.





## Low fat blueberry cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**225g (8oz) plain flour**

**2 tbsp ground flaxseeds**

**2 tsp baking powder**

**1 tsp bicarbonate of soda**

**80g (3oz) sugar**

**225ml (8fl oz) apple sauce**

**2 tbsp sunflower oil**

**75ml (2½fl oz) milk, more if needed**

**100g (3½oz) blueberries, plus extra to decorate**

### FOR THE ICING

**200g (7oz) icing sugar**

**1 tbsp ground cinnamon**

**water**

- 1** For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Combine the dry ingredients in a mixing bowl and stir well. Make a well in the centre.
- 3** Pour in the apple sauce, oil and enough milk to make a smooth, stiff mixture. Stir until thoroughly combined.
- 4** Spoon into the tins to half fill them and sprinkle with blueberries. Cover with more mixture.
- 5** Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes until golden and cooked through. Cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6** For the icing, sift the icing sugar and cinnamon into a bowl. Beat in just enough water to make a smooth thick icing.
- 7** Spoon a little icing on each cake and decorate with blueberries. Leave to set.



## Low fat banana cupcakes

Makes 10

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

**2 free-range eggs, beaten**

**3 very ripe bananas, mashed**

**225g (8oz) plain flour**

**½ tsp salt**

**175g (6oz) sugar**

**1 tsp bicarbonate of soda**

**1 firm banana**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in 10 holes of a muffin tin.
- 2** Beat together the eggs and ripe bananas.
- 3** Mix together the flour, salt, sugar and bicarbonate of soda in a mixing bowl. Stir in the egg mixture and lightly mix, until they are just combined.
- 4** Slice the firm banana.
- 5** Spoon into the paper cases and press 1-2 banana slices into each.
- 6** Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.



## Low fat cashew and maple syrup cupcakes

Makes 12 cupcakes

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 150g (5oz) plain flour**
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp salt**
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter**
- 50g (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz) maple sugar or light brown sugar**
- 2 large free-range egg whites**
- 3 very ripe bananas, mashed**
- 50ml (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ fl oz) maple syrup**
- 2 tbsp apple sauce**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp vanilla extract**
- 75g (2 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz) chopped cashew nuts**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Place paper cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Stir together the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt.
- 3** Beat together the butter and maple sugar in a mixing bowl until soft and light.
- 4** Add the egg whites, mashed bananas, maple syrup, apple sauce and vanilla and beat well until blended.
- 5** Add the flour mixture and stir until just combined. Stir in about half the cashews.
- 6** Spoon into the paper cases and sprinkle the remaining chopped cashews on top.
- 7** Bake for 20-30 minutes until risen and golden. Place on a wire rack to cool completely.



## Low fat poppy seed cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 200g (7oz) self-raising flour**
- 1 tsp baking powder**
- 110g (4oz) caster sugar**
- 1 tbsp finely grated lemon zest**
- 60g (2oz) low fat spread for baking, melted**
- 250ml (9fl oz) semi-skimmed milk**
- 1 free-range egg, beaten**
- 1 tbsp lemon juice**
- 7-8 tbsp apricot jam**
- 5-6 tbsp poppy seeds**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Place paper or silicone cases in a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2** Sift the flour and baking powder into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar and lemon zest.
- 3** Whisk together the melted spread, milk, egg and lemon juice.
- 4** Stir into the dry ingredients until only just combined.
- 5** Spoon the mixture into the cases to half fill them. Top with 1-2 teaspoons of jam. Cover completely with mixture.
- 6** Sprinkle poppy seeds on top.
- 7** Bake for 10-15 minutes until golden and risen. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.



# Low fat raspberry cupcakes

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

**100g (3½oz) low fat plain yoghurt**  
**3 tbsp sunflower oil**  
**1 tbsp lemon juice**  
**2 free-range egg whites**  
**200g (7oz) plain flour**  
**150g (5oz) caster sugar**  
**2 tsp baking powder**  
**¼ tsp salt**  
**250g (9oz) raspberries**

## FOR THE RASPBERRY SAUCE

**250g (9oz) raspberries**  
**2 tbsp sugar**  
**1 tbsp lemon juice**  
**1 tbsp cornflour**  
**125ml (4½fl oz) cold water**

## TO FINISH

**icing sugar**

- 1 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Grease a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Mix together the yoghurt, oil, lemon juice and egg whites until they are well blended.
- 3 Stir together the flour, caster sugar, baking powder and salt in a mixing bowl.
- 4 Add the wet ingredients to the dry and mix until just combined. Gently stir in the raspberries.
- 5 Spoon the mixture into the tin and bake for 15-20 minutes until golden. Cool in the tin for a few minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6 For the raspberry sauce, in a pan over a medium heat, combine half the raspberries, the sugar and lemon juice.
- 7 In a small bowl, whisk the cornflour into the cold water until smooth. Pour the cornflour mixture into the pan and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until thickened.
- 8 Purée the sauce with a handheld blender or potato masher. Stir in the remaining raspberries and set aside to cool. The sauce will continue to thicken as it cools.
- 9 Sift icing sugar over the cakes and serve with the sauce.



## Gluten-free almond and pistachio cupcakes

Makes 6

### FOR THE FILLING

75g (2½oz) ground almonds

50g (1¾oz) xylitol, powdered

1 small free-range egg white, lightly beaten

a few drops of almond extract

### FOR THE CUPCAKES

93g (3½oz) white rice flour

30g (1oz) potato starch flour

17g (½oz) tapioca flour

¼ tsp xanthan gum

½ tsp gluten-free baking powder

¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda

¼ tsp salt

55g (2oz) low fat spread for baking

75g (2½oz) xylitol

1 large free-range egg

1 tsp vanilla extract

75ml (2½fl oz) low fat buttermilk, more if needed

### FOR THE TOPPING

100ml (3½fl oz) low fat Greek yoghurt, drained

100ml (3½fl oz) whipping cream

2-3 tsp pistachio paste

1 For the filling, mix together the ground almonds and xylitol.

2 Add the egg white and almond extract. Knead until smooth, then chop finely.

3 For the cupcakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease six holes of a muffin tin.

4 Stir together the flours, xanthan gum, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Set aside.

5 Beat the low fat spread in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Add the xylitol, then the egg and vanilla and beat until well combined.

6 Add the dry ingredients, alternately with the buttermilk, beginning and ending with the dry ingredients. The mixture should be thick and fluffy.

7 Spoon the mixture into the tin to half fill the holes. Divide the chopped almond filling evenly between the cupcakes and top with the remaining mixture.

8 Bake for 15-20 minutes, until golden. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.

9 For the topping, whisk together the yoghurt and cream until thick. Stir in the pistachio paste.

10 Spoon into a piping bag with a shell nozzle and pipe a rosette on top of each cupcake.



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# How to... photograph your cupcakes

Keep a record of your most successful bakes, so you can replicate the designs again. Follow our top tips for the perfect results...



Feature and photos  
by Judith Bond  
from Judith Bond  
Cakes ([www.judithbondcakes.co.uk](http://www.judithbondcakes.co.uk))

Since starting my cake business, I spent a great deal of time looking at photographs of cakes in magazines, on cake blogs, on Pinterest and Google – photos that not only inspire me to improve my cake craft, but which are taken by expert professional photographers. They have an amazing set of skills that can enhance any product and make it pop out of the page. Effective marketing is vital for a small business starting out, and

as someone who appreciates great photographs, it was an area I wanted to get much better at. As a result, I enrolled in a course, put the theory into practise and am now here to help you do it too.

Whether you're photographing cupcakes to promote your business professionally, or just want to get some good shots as a record of what you've made before they all get devoured, here are my top seven tips for achieving better photography...

funded for small businesses, so make the most of what's available.

## 2 LOVE THE LIGHT

If you want to take great photographs, natural light is your best friend. Make sure you are photographing during the day, either outside or in a naturally lit room. Turn the electric lights off and put your subject near a window so you can maximise the sunlight. Direct sunlight is




## 1 GET A GOOD CAMERA, AND KNOW HOW IT WORKS

Can you believe that the first digital camera was invented 40 years ago? By the mid 1990s most of us were using digital cameras, by the mid 2000s digital models had largely replaced film cameras, and within the last five years almost all of us have acquired a decent quality digital camera integrated into our smartphone, tablet, or other (probably Apple) device.

You can buy a decent DSLR camera for around £300, so it's affordable. It's an essential choice if you want to improve your photography and be able to take those great shots that you can picture clearly in your head, but can't put into practise on your instant camera or your smartphone.

Have a good read of the instruction book, use online resources and make yourself familiar with how it works. Get in touch with your local college or photography group – they can advise on workshops or classes available near your home. Social media is a great way of finding out about courses too. Many of these practical courses are fully

  
*Have a good read  
of your camera  
instruction  
booklet and make  
yourself familiar  
with how it works.*

usually too harsh, so experiment with diffused light by covering your windows with tracing paper or soft white fabric. Use white foam boards, large or small, to reflect the sunlight from the window back onto your subject. Even diffused light will create shadows on one side and this can be balanced by bouncing the light back towards the subject. I have just purchased two large A1 sized (594x841mm (23.4x33.1in)) white foam boards, which I will be using to photograph my cakes. The boards will go flat on the table and behind the cakes, with a sheet of white cardboard to lay on top to remove the dark edge where the foam boards meet.





**TOP TIP** Find the White Balance setting on the camera menu and set it to suit the conditions – this hugely improves the colour hue of a photo, particularly in artificial light.

### 3 IMAGINE THE WHOLE IMAGE

Ansel Adams, the great landscape photographer, once said “You don’t take a photograph, you make it”. Adams also advocated the idea of visualization, whereby you try and imagine the final image before the photo is taken. The aim of this is to move toward the goal of “achieving all together the aesthetic, intellectual, spiritual, and mechanical effects desired”.

I follow a lot of bakers and cake decorators on Facebook and Twitter, and feel constantly disappointed when people ruin their photograph by just snapping it on the kitchen counter with a pile of dirty dishes in the background or by leaving the cake in the box. Backgrounds should be simple, tidy and use colours that complement the cake. I always try to photograph my cakes using plain or subtly decorated backgrounds – wrapping paper can work well, as long as the colours are muted and complement the cake.

### 4 APPLY INTERESTING ANGLES

There are five rules of composition for creating good photographs, which are derived from the psychology of perception. The five rules are simplicity, rule of thirds, lines of force, balance and framing. Try to keep these all in mind when you’re thinking about how to photograph your cupcakes.



*Once you’ve balanced your light and thought about composition, all you need is creative flair.*

### 5 STYLE YOUR SET

Once you’ve balanced your light, thought about your image and how to compose it – all you need is a dusting of creative flair. It’s about creating a lifestyle photo, something to inspire your customers, and give them something to aspire to.

In business and media this is done with varying degrees of artistic flair and resultant success!

One of my favourite photographers is Georgia Glynn Smith whose Twitter account describes her as “an award winning food photographer and commercials director for the great and good of the food world. Always found with energy and a sense of humour”. I first came across Georgia when I discovered she does Peggy Porschen’s photography – and fell in love with her styling immediately. I am a great admirer of her work.



### 6 USE PHOTO EDITING SOFTWARE

Darren Warner, who once taught me a lesson in a little of what Adobe Photoshop can do, gave me some wise advice that resonates. Photo editing is really cool, but should only be used to enhance and improve a photograph, so that it still looks natural and how it was meant to be.

### 7 HAVE FUN!

Photography is only fun if you’re enjoying it, if it inspires you and if you see great photographs all around you. If it’s a chore, then just pay a professional to come and do some studio shots for you – particularly if you’re planning to

use the shots to promote your business. As for me, I got excited about photography long before my cake business started, so it’s a natural partnership and something that makes me smile. Enjoy!



# Basic vanilla cupcakes

By Trudy Mitchell from JellyCake ([www.jellycake.co.uk](http://www.jellycake.co.uk))

Makes 12

## FOR THE CUPCAKES

**150g (5½oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**150g (5½oz) caster sugar**

**½ tsp vanilla extract**

**3 large free-range eggs**

**150g (5½oz) self-raising flour**

## FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

**150g (5½oz) unsalted butter, softened**

**300g (11oz) icing sugar**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4, and line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cases. Place the butter, sugar and vanilla in a mixing bowl. Beat the mixture by hand or using an electric hand whisk until it becomes very light and fluffy.
- 2** Lightly beat the eggs in a jug, then slowly add to the mix, with the mixer on medium speed, beating well between each addition. If the mixture starts to curdle, add a spoonful of the flour.

- 3** Sift the flour into the bowl, then fold in using a metal spoon until just combined.
- 4** Evenly spoon or scoop the mixture into the paper cases. Bake the cupcakes in the oven for approximately 18-20 minutes, until the sponge springs back when touched and a skewer inserted into the centre of one of the cupcakes comes out clean.
- 5** Remove the tin from the oven. Leave the cupcakes to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6** To make the buttercream, place the softened butter, icing sugar and vanilla together in a bowl and mix together slowly using an electric whisk. Once the ingredients are starting to combine, turn up the speed and beat until very light and fluffy.
- 7** Using a nozzle and piping bag of your choice, fold the top of the piping bag down over your hand and carefully spoon the buttercream into the bag.
- 8** Pipe swirls of buttercream onto the top of each cupcake. For smooth iced cupcakes, you don't need a piping bag – simply spoon a little buttercream on top of the cupcake and smooth over using a spatula.

**TIP** To make chocolate cupcakes, substitute 25g (1oz) cocoa powder for an equal quantity of flour. To make chocolate buttercream, substitute 25g (1oz) cocoa powder for an equal quantity of icing sugar.





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# Baking

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Layer cakes as you've never  
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youngest baker

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Hummingbird Bakery's best recipes  
In the kitchen with *Great British Bake*  
Off winner Frances Quinn

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\* Contents subject to change



BAKED  
BY YOU



**Sarah Harris, Maldon from Essex**

"My sunflower cupcakes were made using Katy Sue Designs moulds (Pots and Urns and Little Flowers). The urns are eucalyptus coloured fondant, gently dusted with bronze lustre to get the verdigris effect. The sunflowers are egg yellow fondant for the petals and chocolate flavoured brown fondant for the centre seed heads."

## STAR BAKER!

Every issue our star baker will win a gorgeous cupcake decorating hamper packed with goodies from Rainbow Dust Colours.

[www.rainbowdust.co.uk](http://www.rainbowdust.co.uk)



**Jurgita Birseniene from Romford, Essex**

"These are my lemon raspberry cupcakes with raspberry jam filling, white chocolate frosting and topped with fresh raspberries. The cocktail glass contains raspberry jam, cupcake, frosting and fresh raspberries, and crumbs of homemade honey cookie."



**Steph Addington from Northampton**

"I made these cupcakes for a relative who was turning 21 years old and who plays for Northampton rugby team."



**Natalie Hall from Castle Donington, Derby**

"I was asked to make cupcakes for a lovely work colleague for her return to work from maternity leave. All the flowers and decorations are handmade in sugarpaste."

## SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!

If you'd like us to feature your cupcakes in the Baked By You section of the next *Cupcake Heaven*, just send your high-resolution photos to [cupcakeheaven@anthem-publishing.com](mailto:cupcakeheaven@anthem-publishing.com). Please include your name, home town and a little bit about the cupcakes you've made.



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# Best British Bakers

Recipes from and interviews with  
the UK's hottest rising stars

Exclusive to **Cupcake**  
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# Best British Bakers

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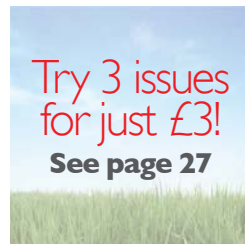
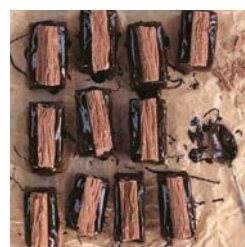
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# Welcome



There's no denying that since *The Great British Bake Off* hit our TV screens back in 2010, the nation has become obsessed with baking. And while the show has enticed a new audience to pick up their wooden spoons and dust off their aprons to start whipping up delicious Victoria sponges, or trying to perfect the art of macaron, it has also highlighted just what talented bakers we have among us right here in the UK.

Over the next 25 pages we meet some of the hottest emerging talent in the world of British baking to discover how they started their journey, uncover their top tips for success, and try out some of their favourite bakes. From Bakewell cherry cupcakes to stem ginger cheesecake, the recipes guarantee to delight family and friends, proving just how great British baking can be. Enjoy!

Sally

**Sally FitzGerald** Senior Editor





## IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

# Jo Wheatley

Winner of *The Great British Bake Off* in 2011, Jo is part of the new wave of British bakers helping to reinvigorate the nation's taste buds...

### Q When and why did you first become interested in baking?

I was about three, when I would stay with my maternal grandmother at weekends and she'd stand me on an upturned bucket and bake with me.

### Q Why did you enter GBBO?

In July 2010 my friend Frances mentioned that there was a new show about to start that she thought I'd love. It was called *The Great British Bake Off*. I applied, but had an email back saying all that year's contestants had been chosen, but would I like to be put on the list for 2011? I ticked yes and thought no more of it. I watched the show, but forgot all about applying until an email came asking if I was still interested. I ticked yes – the best decision I've ever made.

### Q How has life changed since the show?

Massively, it has given me a confidence I never thought possible. It still amazes me that somebody like me can have two *Times* bestseller books. I've always known I could cook and bake, but to have that accolade was something beyond my wildest dreams. I love recipe developing, it is such a passion and joy for me, so to have a career in something I adore is the icing and cherry on the cake.

### Q What do you teach at your home cooking school?

I teach all aspects of baking, my classes are very informal. I want people to relax and have a memorable time, one of those days when you look back years later and think that was such fun. I start by serving everyone tea and coffee and something baked in my conservatory, then we bake. It can be one of my multi-bake days, where we bake a bread item, a cake, some biscuits and a pastry dish. On my cupcake days you'll bake

12 cupcakes and then learn all aspects of decorating them, from buttercream roses to fondant animals. I love this class, it's so relaxing and I love seeing how people's individuality shows through with their decorating styles. On my bread classes we bake four types of breads, including cinnamon buns and my granary loaf. The day includes a two course lunch with a complimentary glass of nice wine and all the packaging to get your bakes home safely. (Visit [www.josblueaga.com/p/2014-classes.html](http://www.josblueaga.com/p/2014-classes.html) for more.)

### Q What are your favourite flavour combinations?

I love rosemary and lemon together when I'm cooking dinner. For baking I love trying different flavour combinations all the time – I think my favourite changes with my moods.

### Q What do you do if a recipe goes wrong?

Recipes do go wrong, but it's very rare that they aren't salvageable. If your cake is under baked in the centre, use a circle cutter to remove the centre and fill with fresh fruits or cream or chocolate (or all three). If your tart has a soggy bottom that's never good, but actually learn from it, write it on the recipe and next time bake at a little lower temp (so the top doesn't burn) for longer. Another good tip is to heat a baking tray when preheating your oven so the pie cooks from the bottom as well as the top.

### Q Are you more of a pastry or cake fan and what recipe couldn't you live without?

That's such a hard question as both have special places in my heart (and tummy). But I think it probably would have to be cake if I had to choose – I'm so pleased I don't have to! A good old Vicky sponge, she's so versatile – dress her up in cream



and fresh fruits or down with raspberry jam and caster sugar. For a special occasion, whip up a chocolate ganache with some lime zest, sandwich together and spread a layer on top, then sprinkle with toasted coconut. She also bakes beautifully over an ovenproof dish filled with soft fruits. Sprinkle with toasted hazelnuts before baking for a gorgeously comforting pudding.

### Q Why do you think baking has seen such a big revival?

Five words: *The Great British Bake Off*. Plus, it's such a nurturing pastime. Everybody loves cake and I think they always have.

### Q How did it feel watching GBBO after you had won?

It felt bizarre. To see yourself on the TV is an odd thing. I think most people are very critical of themselves and I'm no different – I still can't watch the final without crying when I see the look of pride on my boys' faces, just writing about it evokes such strong emotions.

### Q Would you advise others to enter GBBO?

I'd say go for it – if you don't try, you'll never know. It's easy to play safe, but more fun to get out there and try stuff.

The recipes on pages 5-7 are taken from *Home Baking* by Jo Wheatley, photography by Martin Poole and published by Constable. RRP £16.99.





## Stem ginger cheesecake

Serves 8

**70g (2½oz) unsalted butter**  
**15-20 ginger nut biscuits**  
**600g (21oz) full-fat cream cheese**  
**2 tbsp plain flour**  
**175g (6oz) caster sugar, plus 1 tbsp**  
**2 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste**  
**2 large free-range eggs**  
**1 large free-range egg yolk**  
**142ml (5fl oz) sour cream plus 3 tbsp**  
**5 nuggets of stem ginger in syrup, plus extra to serve**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3.
- 2 Melt the butter in a small pan or in the microwave on a low setting in 10 second bursts. Crush the biscuits in a food processor or in a sandwich bag with a rolling pin until they are fine crumbs, and tip into a bowl. Add the melted butter and mix to thoroughly combine.
- 3 Press the buttery crumbs into the base of a 20cm (8in) lightly greased springform cake tin in an even layer and bake on a baking tray on the middle shelf of the oven for 5 minutes. Remove from the oven and allow to cool while you prepare the filling.
- 4 Beat the cream cheese until smooth, then add the flour, caster sugar, vanilla, eggs, yolk and the sour cream and beat again until smooth, light and fluffy.
- 5 Drain the ginger from the jar, reserving the syrup for later. Finely dice and mix into the batter until thoroughly combined. Carefully pour into the cake tin on top of the biscuit base and spread level using a palette knife.
- 6 Place on a baking tray and bake on the middle shelf of the oven for 30-35 minutes until just set. Mix together the extra tbsp of caster sugar and 3 tbsp of sour cream and carefully spoon onto the top of the baked cheesecake. Return to the oven for a further 3-4 minutes until just set.
- 7 Remove from the oven and let the cheesecake cool in the tin. Chill in the tin in the fridge for at least 4 hours or overnight until ready to serve. Drizzle over the reserved stem ginger syrup and scatter with more chopped ginger if you like.



## Ground cinnamon buns

Makes 9

**450g (1lb) strong white bread flour, plus extra for kneading**

**7g (¼oz) easy-blend/fast-action yeast**

**10g (¼oz) sea salt**

**125ml (4½fl oz) full-fat milk**

**40g (1½oz) unsalted butter**

**1 tbsp clear, runny honey**

**175ml (6fl oz) tepid water**

### FOR THE FILLING

**100g (3½oz) unsalted butter, melted**

**100g (3½oz) Demerara sugar**

**3 tsp ground cinnamon**

### FOR THE ICING

**100g (3½oz) unsalted butter**

**200g (7oz) icing sugar**

**1 tsp ground cinnamon**

**100g (3½oz) full-fat cream cheese**

- 1** Tip the flour into the bowl of a free-standing mixer fitted with a dough hook. Add the yeast and salt and make a well in the centre. Heat the milk, water and butter in a small saucepan until they are lukewarm and the butter has melted. Add the honey and pour into the dry ingredients. Mix together until you have a soft dough. Knead in the mixer for 6 minutes, or by hand for 10 minutes, until the dough is smooth and elastic.
- 2** Shape into a ball and put into a large oiled mixing bowl. Cover with clingfilm and leave in a warm place for 90 minutes or until doubled in size.
- 3** Turn out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead for 30 seconds to knock back the dough. Roll into a large, neat 1cm (½in) thick rectangle and brush liberally with the melted butter. Mix together the Demerara sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over the dough.
- 4** With the long side of the rectangle nearest to you, roll the dough away from you into a tight spiral.
- 5** Brush the end with a little melted butter to seal. Trim off the ends and slice into nine equal portions. Pop the buns into a lightly buttered 12-hole muffin tin, cut-side uppermost. Cover loosely with oiled clingfilm and leave to prove for 40 minutes or until doubled in size.
- 6** Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Bake the buns on the middle shelf of the oven for 20-25 minutes until well risen and golden brown. Cool for 10-15 minutes in the tin and then turn out onto a wire rack.
- 7** Make the icing by whisking together the butter, icing sugar and cinnamon until light and fluffy. Add the cream cheese but be careful not to overwhip or the icing will split. Spread the icing over the warm buns using a palette knife.



*Jo Wheatley*







## IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

# Miranda Gore Browne

Finalist in *GBBO*'s first series, Miranda has a lot of snow to thank for setting her on the fast track to baking stardom.

### Q How did you find out about *The Great British Bake Off*?

I was snowed in at home with my two children and we couldn't get to school. I pulled them to the petrol station shop on their sledge and bought supplies and a copy of *Good Food* magazine. At the very back of the magazine was a tiny advert calling amateur bakers to apply for a new baking show – I thought it would be fun.

### Q What is your favourite memory from the show?

Mary Berry saying I reminded her of her when she was younger!

### Q Did you get any essential baking advice while doing it?

Mary taught me how to soften my butter to perfection by putting it in a bowl of hand held warm water – it really helps to make your cakes light and fluffy.

### Q Why did you choose biscuits as your first book topic?

I couldn't find any good books on biscuits and wanted something that was about biscuits, not just American cookies. I wanted to celebrate the Britishness and quirkiness of biscuits and get other people hooked on baking them too.

### Q What are your top tips for biscuit perfection?

Measure carefully and accurately, biscuits are sensitive and too much of the wrong thing makes them spread or not bake properly. Make sure your oven is up to temperature (use an oven thermometer if you're not sure), otherwise the biscuits will melt before they cook! Keep biscuit dough cold. Cool dough makes happy biscuits. I always let my dough rest, then cut out the shapes and pop them back in the fridge before baking. They hold their neat shapes much better if you do this.

### Q What was the inspiration behind your latest book?

Everyone kept saying to me they just didn't have time to bake cakes and couldn't understand how I could fit them in with such a busy life. I wanted to share my tips and simple recipes to show that anyone can bake a cake, even if it's just a one bowl and wooden spoon recipe like the five minute sticky malt loaf.

### Q What are your five top tips for anyone starting to bake?

Remember your cake doesn't need to look perfect, everyone loves homemade cake and your friends and family will be thrilled you made it. Make sure your butter is super soft (Mary's tip above). Cream thoroughly to get lots of air into your mixture – 2-3 minutes on a high speed in the mixer or vigorously by hand with a balloon whisk or wooden spoon. Weigh accurately – use digital scales and check you've put in all the ingredients. Add dry ingredients very gently, by hand or folding in on a low speed, this ensures you keep all the lovely air in the cake.

### Q What advice do you have for decorating biscuits?

Make sure you use royal icing and that you beat it properly in the mixer – if the icing hasn't been beaten for long enough it won't set hard. Buy some icing bottles as they are a lot easier to use for run-out icing than piping bags. Practise piping with your piping bag on a chopping board before you try it on your biscuits. Choose simple biscuit shapes to start with as these are easier to ice around the edges. There are lots more tips in my book *Biscuit* (published by Ebury Press).

### Q Can you tell us about your cookery school?

My light, bright and homely kitchen cookery school is in the heart of the



West Sussex countryside, yet easily accessible from London. I wanted to create an environment that was welcoming and relaxing and a fun place for people to learn to cook and bake. I run masterclasses for up to twelve and demonstrations for up to 25 people, as well as foodie pop up events such as Strawberry Days in June and Apple Pop Up in the autumn. I have a programme of visiting chefs and specialists who are also joining me to teach at my school. My vintage tea party baking can be booked for hen parties or a day out with friends. Visit [www.mirandagorebrowne.typepad.com](http://www.mirandagorebrowne.typepad.com) for more details or see @MirandaBakes on Twitter.

### Q What plans do you have for the rest of the year?

I'm making a very exciting cake for royalty, baking with Lotte Duncan at AGA in Thame, judging at the Thame Food Festival, baking with gorgeous Kenwood mixers at The Goodwood Revival, filming two DVDs in June about baking biscuits and baking from the garden, my recipes will be supporting national charities Dreams Come True and Carers for Carers, appearing at The Cake and Bake Show, teaching classes at Miranda's Kitchen Cookery School and plenty more!

The recipes on page 9 are from *Bake Me A Cake As Fast As You Can* by Miranda Gore Browne, published by Ebury Press, RRP £14.99. Photography by Rosie Barnett.





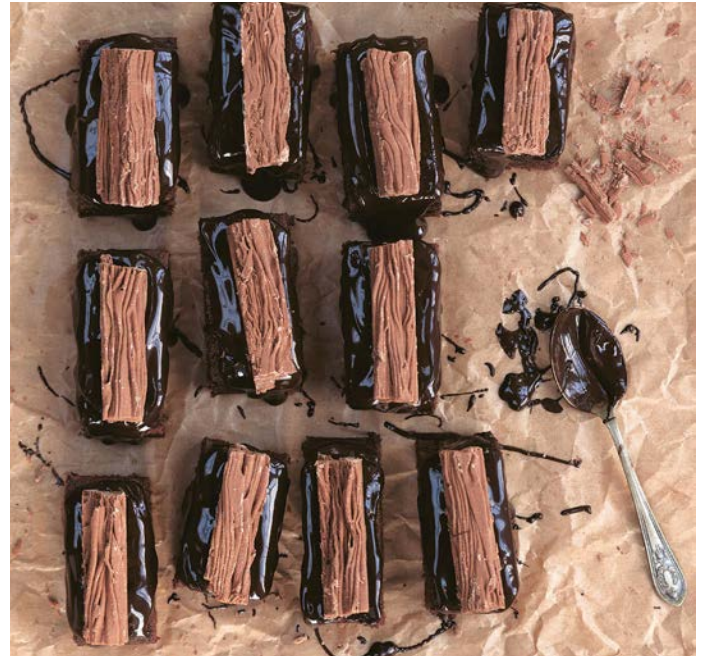


## Blackberry cake

*Serves 6-8*

**275g (10oz) blackberries (less is also fine), unwashed**  
**150g (5½oz) unsalted butter**  
**3 large free-range eggs**  
**150g (5½oz) caster sugar, plus extra for sprinkling**  
**2 tbsp Demerara sugar**  
**1 tsp vanilla essence, or seeds from 1 vanilla pod**  
**250g (9oz) plain flour**  
**1½ tsp baking powder**  
**125ml (4½fl oz) semi-skimmed milk**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 23cm (9in) springform cake tin (at least 6cm (2½in) deep) with a cake tin liner – these are fantastic as this is quite a runny batter. Alternatively, use non-stick baking paper.
- 2** Check through the blackberries for dirt and brush off any with a piece of kitchen towel (washing them would add water to the mix), and put to one side. Melt the butter and set aside.
- 3** Put the eggs, sugars and vanilla into the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a balloon whisk attachment and whisk until pale and fluffy. Alternatively, use a hand-held electric mixer.
- 4** Sift in the flour and baking powder, and mix until incorporated. Pour the melted butter and milk into the mix and whisk again.
- 5** Sprinkle a handful of the blackberries into the bottom of the cake tin. Pour about half of the cake mix over the top of the berries. Sprinkle half of the remaining berries over the cake mix, then add the remaining mix. Finally, sprinkle the remaining berries over the top and sprinkle with caster sugar (or vanilla sugar if you have it).
- 6** Put the cake tin on a baking sheet (to catch spillages) and bake in the oven for about 1 hour, or until the cake is golden on top and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.
- 7** Remove from the oven and cool before taking out of the tin.



## Chocolate jammy Flake bars

*Makes about 18*

**225g (8oz) unsalted butter**  
**225g (8oz) caster sugar**  
**4 large free-range eggs**  
**2 tsp vanilla extract**  
**150g (5½oz) self-raising flour**  
**2 tsp baking powder**  
**80g (3oz) cocoa powder, sifted**  
**50ml (1¾fl oz) semi-skimmed milk**  
**8 tbsp strawberry jam**  
**200g (7oz) plain chocolate, such as Bournville**  
**6 Flake bars, each broken into three**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 and line a 20x30cm (8x12in) tray bake tin with non-stick baking paper.
- 2** Put the butter, sugar, eggs and vanilla in the bowl of an electric mixer and cream together. Add the flour, baking powder and cocoa powder and beat well to combine. Add the milk, and mix again.
- 3** Spoon half the mixture into the tin and spread to make a thin layer. Dollop the jam across the mixture, then spread with a palette knife. Add the remaining cake mix and spread to level and cover the jam.
- 4** Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes or until springy to the touch and coming away from the edges of the tin. Leave to cool in the tin for about 30 minutes, then lift the cake out of the tin, still in its baking paper, and stand on a chopping board.
- 5** While the cake bakes, melt the chocolate in the microwave or in a bowl over a pan of simmering water. Remove from the heat and leave to cool a little.
- 6** Use a sharp knife to cut the cake into about 18 portions. Spoon the melted chocolate over each cake in a thick layer. Press the Flake pieces into the chocolate on each cake while the chocolate is still soft. Leave to set or, if impatient, eat messily while still warm!



## TOP 20 BAKING TIPS

# Edd Kimber

There's always something to learn when you're baking and we got *GBBO* winner Edd to reveal his top 20 tips to make your baking better..

- 1 Always measure the ingredients in advance, it helps keeps everything running smooth.
- 2 Read recipes a couple times before starting, it will help prevent silly mistakes.
- 3 Once you've made a recipe a couple of times feel free to play around with it a little, but avoid this when trying a new recipe for the first time before you really know how it works.
- 4 Work tidy. If your workspace is messy then it's harder to bake well.
- 5 Put on some music, I find it relaxes me and gets me in the baking mood.
- 6 Baking times are a guide, ovens can vary a lot so use your intuition and knowledge to check things are fully baked.
- 7 Try different flours, there are so many flours out there that have amazing flavours. A favourite of mine is buckwheat.
- 8 Use an electric scale, which are cheap and really improve the accuracy of your baking.
- 9 Take time – baking should never be rushed.
- 10 If you want fresh bread in the morning, but don't wake up at the crack of dawn, put the kneaded bread in the fridge to rise slowly overnight. It improves the flavour and cuts the work needed in the morning.
- 11 Try new flavours, sometimes you'll discover a new love.
- 12 Don't worry too much, unless you burn it there's a good chance it will still taste good and perfection is overrated.
- 13 Don't use the baking powder from the back of the cupboard. If it has been there for years it probably won't work!
- 14 If you love bread, especially sourdough, keep a dough diary. Keeping track of the rise times, room temperature and ratios will help you keep your bread consistent.
- 15 Try tonka beans, one of my favourite ingredients to add flavour.
- 16 If using vanilla pods, look for fat waxy beans. If they are thin and brittle they are stale and won't have much flavour.
- 17 If you don't want to spend the money on vanilla beans, use vanilla bean paste. It is more expensive than extract but is packed full of actual beans.
- 18 Don't worry about failing, sometimes you learn more that way.
- 19 Use an oven thermometer. Some ovens are very inaccurate and a cheap thermometer can help you keep the heat correct.
- 20 Most of all just enjoy it, baking is fun!



The recipes on pages 11-14 are taken from *Patisserie Made Simple* by Edd Kimber, published by Kyle Books, priced £19.99. Photography by Laura Edwards.







## Chocolate sablés

Makes 40

### FOR THE SABLÉ DOUGH

**275g (10oz) plain flour**

**40g (1½oz) cocoa powder**

**¾ tsp bicarbonate of soda**

**½ tsp flaked sea salt**

**200g (7oz) unsalted butter at room temperature, diced**

**50g (1¾oz) caster sugar**

**200g (7oz) light brown sugar**

**½ tsp vanilla extract**

**175g (6oz) dark chocolate, finely chopped**

### FOR THE COATING

**250g (9oz) dark chocolate, tempered**

**cacao nibs, to sprinkle (optional)**

- 1 Sift the flour, cocoa powder and bicarbonate of soda into a medium bowl and add the sea salt, then stir together. Set aside.
- 2 Put the butter in a large mixing bowl and, using an electric mixer, beat until smooth and light. Add the sugars and vanilla extract, and beat together for 2 minutes until smooth. Add the dry ingredients to the bowl and mix together until you have a mixture that looks sandy (sablé means sandy in English). Add the chocolate and mix to

combine. The final dough should look almost like soil – it should not have formed into one large ball of dough. This is the key to getting the correct texture; mixed for too long the biscuits will be tough.

- 3 Tip out the mixture onto a work surface and gently press together to form a uniform dough. Divide in half and roll into two logs, 4cm (1½in) thick. Wrap in clingfilm and put them in the fridge for 3 hours or until firm. (You can freeze the dough for baking at a later date, or bake one half of the dough and freeze the second.)
- 4 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 and line three baking trays with baking parchment. Remove the dough from the fridge and, using a thin, sharp knife, cut into rounds about 1cm (½in) thick. Put the biscuits onto the baking trays, leaving 2cm (1in) between each one. Bake for 10–12 minutes until set around the outside, but still soft in the centre. Leave the biscuits to cool on the trays for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 Line a baking tray with baking parchment. Once the biscuits are cool, dip each one halfway into the tempered (melted) chocolate, allowing the excess to drip off. Put onto the prepared tray and sprinkle with a few cacao nibs before allowing the chocolate to set fully at room temperature.
- 6 The biscuits keep for up to one week stored in an airtight container.

## Mont Blanc

Serves 6

### FOR THE SABLÉ BRETON

**100g (3½oz) plain flour**

**a pinch of flaked sea salt**

**¾ tsp baking powder**

**60g (2oz) caster sugar**

**2 large free-range egg yolks**

**75g (2¾oz) unsalted butter, very soft, diced**

### FOR THE CHESTNUT PASTE

**120g (4¼oz) unsalted butter at room temperature, diced**

**300g (10½oz) sweetened chestnut purée**

**4 tbsp icing sugar**

### FOR THE CHESTNUT CREAM

**225g (8oz) whipping cream**

**3 marron glacé, roughly chopped**

**icing sugar, for dusting or edible gold leaf, to decorate**

- 1** For the sablé Breton, put the flour, salt and baking powder in a bowl and mix together; then set aside. Put the sugar and the egg yolks in a large bowl and, using an electric whisk, beat for 2 minutes or until the mixture is very pale and light. Beat in the butter, a little at a time, until the mixture is smooth and fully combined. Add the flour mixture and mix on a low speed until a dough just starts to form. Scrape the dough out onto a work surface and lightly knead until a smooth dough is formed. Put the dough between two sheets of baking parchment and roll it out until it is about 5mm (¼in) thick. Transfer the dough, still between its baking parchment, to a baking tray and chill in the fridge for at least 1 hour or until firm.
- 2** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 and line a baking tray with baking parchment. Remove the dough from the fridge and peel off the top sheet of baking parchment. Cut out rounds 8cm (3in) in diameter and put inside tart rings of the same size, set on the prepared baking tray. To get the six rounds of dough you will need to press the scraps of dough back together and roll out again. (If you don't have tart rings, you can bake the sablés without them on the prepared tray, but they will spread and will need to be cut back to size when baked.) Bake for 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Leave the sablés to cool for 2 minutes, then remove the tart rings and transfer the sablés to a wire rack to cool completely. (If you are baking the sablés without rings, as soon they come out of the oven use an 8cm (3in) cookie cutter to cut them to the correct size.)
- 3** To make the chestnut paste, put the butter in a bowl and beat until pale and creamy. Add the chestnut purée and icing sugar, and beat together until smooth. Transfer the paste to a piping bag fitted with a large multi-opening piping tip (often called a grass piping tip). If you don't have one of these, you can snip the very end off a disposable piping bag, creating a small hole.
- 4** Whip the cream until it holds firm peaks and then mix in the chopped marron glacé. Put a scoop of cream onto the centre of each sablé and pipe the chestnut paste around the cream, then finish by dusting over a little icing sugar or topping with a little edible gold leaf.
- 5** The sablés can be made up to four days in advance and stored in an airtight container; but the remaining elements are best made close to the time of serving.







## Lemon pound cake

Serves 10

**115g (4oz) unsalted butter at room temperature, diced, plus extra for greasing**

**250g (9oz) caster sugar**

**finely grated zest of 2 lemons**

**1 tsp lemon extract (optional)**

**4 large free-range eggs**

**225g (8oz) self-raising flour**

**125g (4½oz) soured cream**

### FOR THE LEMON GLAZE

**40ml (1½fl oz) lemon juice (juice of 1 lemon)**

**160g (5½oz) icing sugar**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease a 23x13cm (9x5in) loaf tin and line it with a strip of baking parchment. Put the butter, sugar, lemon zest and lemon extract (if using) in a large bowl and, using an electric mixer, beat for 5 minutes or until light and fluffy.
- 2 Put the eggs in a jug and whisk them together; then, working slowly, add the egg to the butter mixture, a little at a time, beating until fully combined before adding more. Once all the egg has been combined, sift in half the flour, mixing until just combined. Add the soured cream and mix until fully combined, then sift in the remaining flour and mix until just combined – don't over-mix, as it can make the cake tough.
- 3 Scrape the mixture into the prepared tin and gently level the top. Bake for 55-60 minutes until golden brown and a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for 10 minutes, before inverting it onto a wire rack to cool until lukewarm.
- 4 To make the glaze, mix the lemon juice and icing sugar together in a bowl to make a thin, pourable glaze. Put a piece of baking parchment under the wire rack to catch the drips from the glaze. Pour the lemon glaze over the lukewarm cake, and use a pastry brush to spread it over the entire surface in an even layer. Leave the cake to cool completely on the wire rack before serving.
- 5 This cake will keep for 3-4 days stored in an airtight container. It can also be frozen for up to one month without the glaze.







## IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

# John Whaite

After winning series three of *GBBO* and writing two successful books, John's next step in his baking adventure is to start his own cookery school on the family farm...



### Q When did you first become interested in baking?

At my mother's knee as a small child. She'd always bake fairy cakes and other home comforts. When I flew the nest and started at university, I found baking to be a very tranquil process.

### Q Can you tell us about your new cookery school?

John Whaite's Kitchen is in a 400 year old barn on my family farm. I've taken it over and am currently renovating it. I will offer classes taught by me, and other teachers, in all manner of skills. From baking to chocolate work, from butchery to specialist ethnic food classes. Visit [www.johnwhaite.com](http://www.johnwhaite.com) to see the latest news on the kitchen.

### Q What will students achieve during a day at the school?

A skill set and insight into particular areas of food preparation, whilst having a memorable day out.

### Q What made you decide to set up your own cooking school on the farm?

I started teaching some classes in Greenwich when I moved down to London and they were so fun – for me and the students. So I thought, rather than waste money in a kitchen that isn't mine, and rather than just 'making do' with their equipment, why not set up my own kitchen, in my own style, with my own equipment?

### Q What is your advice for someone just starting out with baking?

Don't overthink it – do as the recipe says and make sure you read the recipe at least twice before starting. It's also extremely helpful to get all of your ingredients weighed out before starting, that way you'll not mess up the cupboards with your messy hands.

### Q What are your top tips for perfect patisserie?

Planning is key, you can't just dive into it as though it were a loaf of bread. You've got to think carefully about each and every process, and get the items as uniformly executed and decorated as possible. I always wear chef's whites when working with patisserie recipes – it just helps to get me in the right frame of mind.

### Q What's your favourite thing to bake?

That's like asking a mother which of her children is her favourite. Love doesn't divide, it multiplies. I can't answer this.

### Q How do you come up with new recipes?

Usually I'll start with a new flavour combination and then think about which vessel would best carry that.

### Q What's your favourite flavour combination?

I'm pretty keen on traditional flavours – I don't think you can beat caramelised onions and cheese, a very sharp lemon meringue, or a plain vanilla cake. But, I do still experiment with 'out-there' ideas.

### Q How do you decide what recipes to put in your books?

By testing them, and having others test them. If they are in any way misleading, complicated or unsuccessful, they get a face-lift or end up in the trash.

### Q What baking equipment couldn't you live without?

A wooden spoon, a bowl and a rolling pin. That's all you really need, but in this materialistic day and age, I guess I'd be pretty lonely without my KitchenAid.

### Q What's your favourite childhood bake?

Coconut macaroons. Really chewy ones, absolutely smothered in melted milk chocolate!

The recipes on pages 16-18 are taken from *John Whaite Bakes At Home* by John Whaite, published by Headline, RRP £20.



## Peanut butter and jelly cheesecake

Serves 10

### FOR THE PRALINE

**100g (3½oz) caster sugar**

**2 tbsp water**

**150g (5½oz) salted peanuts**

### FOR THE BASE

**300g (10½oz) digestive biscuits**

**120g (4¼oz) unsalted butter**

### FOR THE CHEESECAKE

**750g (1lb 10oz) full-fat cream cheese**

**150g (5½oz) smooth, sweet peanut butter**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

**200g (7oz) golden caster sugar**

**2 tbsp plain flour**

**a pinch of salt**

**3 free-range eggs, separated**

### FOR THE JELLY TOP

**2 gelatine leaves**

**340g (12oz) jar of seedless raspberry jam**

**1 tbsp water**

**2 tbsp cherry brandy (optional)**

**salted peanuts, to scatter**

- 1** First prepare the equipment. Place a large sheet of baking paper on the worktop to set the hot praline on – you may want to put this on a baking sheet to protect your work surface. Wrap the outside of a 23cm (9in) deep springform cake tin with foil to make it waterproof, and ensure you have a roasting tray into which the cake tin fits, with room for water to come halfway up the sides of the tin. Line the base of the cake tin with a circle of baking paper.
- 2** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4, and boil a kettle of water.
- 3** Make the peanut praline by placing the caster sugar and water in a saucepan. Mix together while cold, then place the pan on a high heat. Using a wet pastry brush, sweep down any sugar crystals from the sides of the pan, but don't stir the contents at any time or the mixture will crystallize. Allow to bubble away for about 5 minutes until a lovely amber colour. You can swirl the pan to ensure even browning, but don't stir. Once you have achieved the amber colour, remove from the heat, pour in the peanuts and stir until well covered. Tip this onto the baking paper and flatten down with a spoon. Allow to set until cold and brittle.
- 4** Make the base by blitzing the digestive biscuits to fine crumbs in a food processor, then add the butter and blitz again to a sandy rubble. Break up the peanut praline and add to the food processor, then pulse until the praline is broken up and evenly distributed among the rubble – you don't want to pulverize the praline, just break it a little and evenly disperse it.
- 5** Tip the contents of the food processor into the cake tin and, using a spoon, press everything down until compacted and evenly spread. Place in the fridge.
- 6** To make the cheesecake, place the cream cheese and peanut butter in a large mixing bowl with the vanilla. Mix together well, but gently, with a wooden spoon or spatula. Add the sugar, flour, salt and egg yolks, and beat again until smooth. Place the egg whites in a separate and clean mixing bowl, and whisk until they just hold their shape. Mix a third of this into the cheese mixture to slacken it, then gently fold in the remaining two-thirds.
- 7** Take the cheesecake base from the fridge, pour the cheesecake mixture over it and place in the roasting tin. Put in the oven, but before you close the oven door, pour the hot water into the roasting dish – being careful not to splash any onto the cheesecake. Bake for 30-40 minutes. You will know the cheesecake is perfectly baked when the top has a sheen and there is a slight wobble in the middle. Remove from the oven and from the water bath, and set onto a cooling rack until completely cool – about an hour.
- 8** When the cheesecake has cooled, make the jelly topping. Fill a jug with cold water and soak the gelatine leaves in it. Place the jam in a saucepan with the water and set over a medium heat. Stir as it heats to prevent the jam burning. When it is hot, but not boiling, remove from the heat and stir in the cherry brandy, if using. Take the gelatine leaves from their soaking water – they should now be very floppy – and squeeze out any excess moisture. Add to the jammy mix and stir until completely dissolved. Allow this jelly to cool for about 30 minutes before pouring over the top of the cheesecake. Cover the whole thing with clingfilm, though don't allow it to touch the jelly, and place in the fridge overnight to set.
- 9** You can decorate the cheesecake by scattering salted peanuts over it, but I also think it is perfect with its gleaming jelly top unadorned.







## Sherbet lemon cake

Serves 8-10

### FOR THE CANDIED LEMON TOPPING

2 lemons

600ml (21fl oz) water (in batches of 200ml (7fl oz))

100g (3½oz) granulated sugar

100ml (3½fl oz) water

75g (2¾oz) golden caster sugar

### FOR THE CAKE

finely grated zest of 3 lemons

4 free-range eggs

225g (8oz) golden caster sugar

225g (8oz) butter, very soft

225g (8oz) self-raising flour

1 tsp baking powder

### FOR THE FILLING

400ml (14fl oz) whipping cream

500g (1lb 2oz) mascarpone cheese

300g (10½oz) icing sugar

finely grated zest of 2 lemons

1 tbsp lemon juice

2 packets of lemon Dip Dabs (sherbet only)

icing sugar, to dust



- 1 For the lemon topping, use a potato peeler to pare thick strips of peel from the lemons – if you get any white pith, scrape it off with a knife.
- 2 Chop the lemon peel into thin matchsticks, then place in a small saucepan with 200ml (7fl oz) water. Bring to the boil, then drain the water, place the lemon zest back into the pan with another 200ml (7fl oz) water and repeat. Drain again then repeat – you should bring the lemon zest to the boil three times in total.
- 3 Set the drained lemon zest matchsticks aside.
- 4 Place the 100g (3½oz) sugar and 100ml (3½fl oz) water in the saucepan and bring to the boil until the sugar is completely dissolved, then return the lemon zest and allow to poach for about 5 minutes. Drain.
- 5 Place the 75g (2¾oz) golden caster sugar in a bowl and add the lemon matchsticks. Toss in the sugar, then arrange on a baking sheet and allow to dry out for a few hours (overnight is better).
- 6 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 7 Place the ingredients for the cake into a mixing bowl and beat together until well incorporated and smooth. If you have a freestanding electric mixer, use the paddle attachment.
- 8 Divide the batter between two 20cm (8in) loose-bottomed round cake tins, greased and lined with baking paper, and bake for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Remove from the oven and allow to cool slightly, before removing from the tins and turning onto a cooling rack until completely cold.
- 9 Meanwhile, make the filling by whipping the cream to very soft floppy peaks. Fold this into the mascarpone along with the sifted icing sugar and lemon zest until smooth. Quickly beat in the lemon juice – though don't overbeat, because you don't want the mixture to split.
- 10 When the cake is cooled, and the candied lemon is dry, slice each cake in half horizontally so that you have four layers. Place one on a cake stand at least 20cm (8in) across. Fill a disposable piping bag (12mm (½in) tip) with the filling and pipe little blobs around the edge of the cake, then a spiral of filling in the centre. Sprinkle over a third of the sherbet, then top with another slice of cake. Repeat this until you have four layers of cake and three layers of cream and sherbet.
- 11 Sift a layer of icing sugar over the top, then scatter over the candied lemon matchsticks.





## IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

# James Morton

Baker, writer, doctor and series three *GBBO* finalist... there seems to be no end to James Morton's growing list of talents and now he's planning to take on brewing too.

### Q What have you been doing since the *GBBO*?

I've been trying to get a medical degree, whilst also riding the inevitable wave of reality-TV fuelled success as much as I can. It's been great, as I've managed to (finally) get to the stage where I'm about to start work as a doctor and have published two books, which I hope you like.

### Q How did you find your *GBBO* experience?

It was pretty awesome, if intense. It was 10 long weeks of stress, but some of it was truly amazing. Mel and Sue were super awesome.

### Q What was your favourite moment in the show?

Probably winning 'Star Baker', on my 21st birthday, after thinking I was going to go home after the disaster that was my gingerbread barn monstrosity. I got the most awesome birthday card signed by all the crew and, obviously, a cake.

### Q You appear very interested in the science behind the baking – when did this interest first start?

From the start. I've always enjoyed asking 'why?' when people have told me I have to do something in order for baking to turn out right. I suppose the reason for it is laziness – why go through baking techniques again and again that make no difference? Like sieving.

### Q What's the biggest baking falsehood you've ever heard?

There are so many. I think, above all, the "gluten is bad for you" lot perpetuate their falsehood to the greatest and most disastrous effect. Unless you've got coeliac disease, gluten is most definitely not bad for you.

### Q What do you enjoy most about baking?

The end product, obviously. I then quite like to examine what I've made and look for ways to improve on it.

### Q What's your favourite thing to bake?

It changes daily, but consistently bread has been up there. Right now I'm going through a bit of a tart phase, though. I'm all about that sweetcrust.

### Q What's the key to baking a good macaroon?

Well, there are so many. The most important is to leave them to rest for at least half an hour *after* you've piped them. This lets the skin form. But otherwise, the texture is key. It should flow like lava. It should definitely not be stiff like meringue.

### Q You're a fan of using salt in your baking – can you explain why?

That's simple – salt is a flavour enhancer. Salt makes things taste nice and that isn't limited to savoury things. All baking should be seasoned adequately, including cakes and pastry.

### Q Essence or extract?

Extract, of course, as essence is horrible synthetic rubbish. But, I've found myself converted to the vanilla bean paste you can now get everywhere. It gives awesome flavour with just a tiny wee bit.

### Q What's the key to making perfect pastry?

Don't add too much water. A lot of people get hung up on keeping it cold or not overworking it, which is good, but don't forget about the water. Add as little as possible, and if it's a choice between



working it hard or adding more water, then work it.

### Q What advice do you wish you had known when you first started baking?

As soon as you've added flour to anything, don't overwork it. For example, when you've added it in a cake, only gentle folding from then on. Obviously, don't include bread in that.

### Q What's next?

I'm still baking, but I've got a bit of brewing to do! I'm starting up a brewing company and hope to soon publish a book that demystifies brewing beer at home. It's really very easy and you wouldn't believe how cheap it is. I'm also starting work as a full time junior doctor in August, so I think I'll be plenty busy.

The recipes on pages 20-22 are from *How Baking Works* by James Morton, published by Ebury Press, RRP £20. Photography by Andy Sewell.



## Blackberry tart macaron

*Makes 4-6 macarons (8-12 shells), depending on size*

**100g (3½oz) icing sugar**

**60g (2oz) ground almonds**

**2 medium free-range egg whites**

**40g (1½oz) caster sugar**

**dark purple food colouring (or a mix of blue and red)**

### FOR THE FILLING

**150g (5½oz) cream cheese (must be full-fat and chilled)**

**150g (5½oz) icing sugar**

**a bunch of fresh mint, finely chopped**

**finely grated zest of 1 lime**

**3 punnets of fresh blackberries**

### FOR THE GLAZE (OPTIONAL)

**a handful of blackberries (from those used for the filling)**

**3 tbsp caster sugar**

- 1** Line a baking tray with a piece of baking paper. In a food processor or blender, blitz together the icing sugar and almonds to remove any lumps.
- 2** In a large glass or stainless steel bowl, whisk your egg whites to stiff peaks. Add the caster sugar, a teaspoon at a time, whisking on the highest speed (if using an electric mixer) all the time. Once your sugar is incorporated, whisk in enough food colouring to take it to a colour you like.
- 3** Fold in half your almond mix as carefully as you can, then add the final half and gently beat out a little of the air to loosen the mix. It should flow from the spoon like lava down the side of a mountain.
- 4** Fill a piping bag with your mix, cut a 1cm (½in) hole in the end and pipe 8-12 big splodges or spirals onto the baking paper; about 4-6cm (2in) in width, so that when they splay out slightly they will be up to 8cm (3½in) in diameter. Pick up the tray and drop it from 1-2 feet onto the work surface. Do this twice more to remove any big bubbles.
- 5** Leave the macarons to rest for 30 minutes at the very least, for the skins to form, so they don't split in the oven.
- 6** Whilst the skins are forming, preheat your oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3, then prepare your cream cheese filling. Simply whisk the cream cheese and icing sugar together with an electric mixer on a high speed (or by hand with a lot of effort). When the mix is thick and creamy, keep going – you can incorporate air like whipping cream. Stir in the mint and lime zest, adjusting to taste. Scoop the filling into another piping bag.
- 7** Make your glaze, if desired. Take 5 or 6 blackberries in a bowl and crush them with the back of a spoon. Pour the juice into a pan and add a tablespoon of water and the caster sugar. Bring the mixture to the boil over a high heat, then set aside off the heat, until needed.
- 8** Bake your macarons for about 15-18 minutes, or until 'feet' have formed, they feel crisp to touch, but have not yet coloured. Leave them to cool on the tray.
- 9** To build, make a circle of blackberries around the outside of the underside of a cooled shell (you can use a touch of the icing if they keep falling down). Then, pipe a generous amount of your icing inside, closing with another macaron shell. To finish, brush all visible fruit with a little glaze.







## Peanut butter brownies

Makes 16

**100g (3½oz) softened, unsalted butter**

**150g (5½oz) crunchy peanut butter**

**150g (5½oz) caster sugar**

**1 free-range egg, beaten**

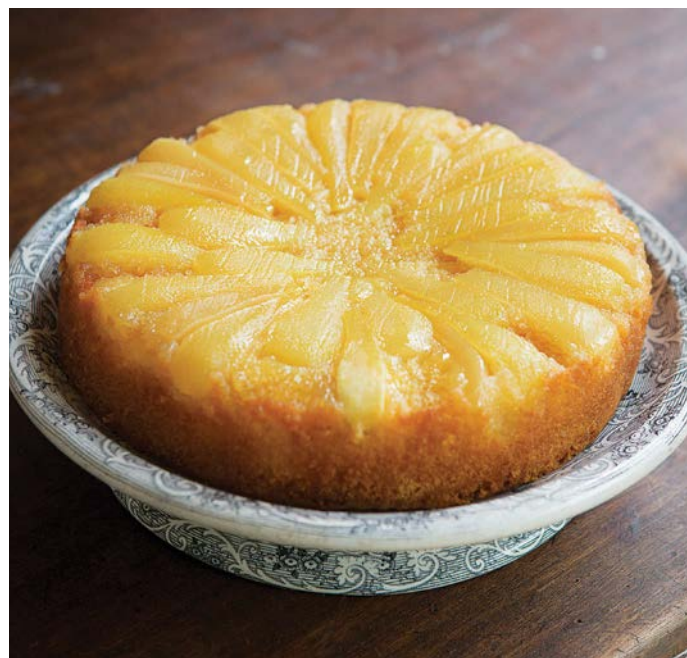
**1 tsp vanilla extract**

**100g (3½oz) self-raising flour**

**50g (1½oz) unsalted peanuts**

**100g (3½oz) dark chocolate, chopped**

- 1 Preheat your oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Stuff a ripped-off square of baking paper into a 20cm (8in) square tin.
- 2 In a large bowl, beat the butter, peanut butter and sugar together until paste-like. There is no need to cream as you would for a cake.
- 3 Add the egg and vanilla and beat until combined. Again, there is no need to develop air.
- 4 Add the flour, peanuts and chopped chocolate, stirring gently to combine. Dollop the mixture into your cake tin and spread out to the edges, for it should be quite tough.
- 5 Bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown on top and moderately resistant when pressed. A skewer inserted should come out clean.



## Pear and vanilla upside-down cake

Serves 8-10

**250g (9oz) softened, salted butter**

**250g (9oz) caster sugar**

**4 medium free-range eggs**

**75g (2½oz) Greek-style yoghurt**

**seeds from 1 vanilla pod**

**260g (9oz) self-raising flour**

**1 tsp baking powder**

### FOR THE TOP (BOTTOM?)

**4 pears, preferably Williams or Conference, peeled and thinly sliced**

**100g (3½oz) salted butter**

**200g (7oz) caster sugar**

**juice of ½ lemon**

- 1 First, line the bottom of a 23cm (9in) springform tin with baking paper; and grease it well. Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3, and put a tray or piece of foil on the bottom to catch any drips.
- 2 Prepare the upside-down bit. Make the caramel by heating your butter, caster sugar and lemon juice together in a pan, stirring all the time until melted. Pour this onto the base of your tin and arrange the pears on top.
- 3 Into a large bowl, weigh the butter and sugar. Using an electric whisk or a wooden spoon, beat them together until smooth, light and creamy – this will take at least 5 minutes.
- 4 Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Then add the yoghurt and scrape in the vanilla seeds and beat them in as you did the eggs. Smooth would be nice, but this is likely to curdle and don't worry if it does.
- 5 Gently fold in the flour and baking powder using a large metal spoon, just enough to combine. If it isn't at a dropping consistency, stir in a touch more yoghurt.
- 6 Carefully pour your mix onto your fruit and bake in the oven for approximately 40-50 minutes, or until golden brown and springy and a skewer comes out clean.





## IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

# Luis Troyano

Anyone who watched Luis on series five of *The Great British Bake Off* will remember his amazing creations and there's still plenty of creativity to come from him...

### Q Why did you decide to enter *The Great British Bake Off*?

I used to be the guy that would sit watching it with a friend and go on about how I would approach the tasks. My friend said "why don't you apply!?", so I did. I never thought in my wildest dreams I would actually walk into the tent one day. Having been through it, I no longer sit and criticise any cookery-based TV show as I appreciate how stressful and hard work taking part actually is.

### Q What was your favourite aspect of the show?

Wow, there's so many parts I really enjoyed. From a baking point of view I really enjoyed the excitement of the technical challenges. They really were as secretive as you see it, so my heart was always racing just before finding out what we had to bake. From a personal point of view I walked away with 11 fantastic new friends in the other contestants, which has been simply amazing. The judging was always really exciting too!

### Q Why do you love Bakewell tarts so much?

That's an easy one to answer. My mum used to buy them for me as a child, so they really are my favourite bake to eat. In fact, they are probably one of the reasons I taught myself how to bake as I wanted to make my own version. There really is something magical about pastry, raspberry jam and almond flavours all combining into one.

### Q What is the secret to the perfect Bakewell tart?

A really thin pastry case is always a good starting point. I like my Bakewell to have a fully iced top too. Definitely some lemon in the filling to cut through the sweetness and a hint of Amaretto liqueur in the icing finishes things off.

### Q How do you make sure your bakes look just as impressive as they taste?

The look of a bake is really important to me. As a trained designer, baking is my creative outlet and I really enjoy making bakes look good. I firmly believe that what we eat should always look good as well as taste great, it makes for a better eating experience. I always take my time when finishing or decorating a bake. If I'm not sure if something will work I'll always have a practice of a technique before diving in. Most importantly though, I only decorate with ingredients that I think will enhance or complement the final taste of the bake.

### Q Can you tell us about your new book *Bake It Great*?

I wanted to write a book that didn't presume anything about the reader's knowledge, but at the same time has recipes that the experienced baker would find interesting. There's over 100 recipes to try. Every recipe, whether quick or complex, goes into real detail to ensure success every time. A lot of bakes tend to go wrong during the baking in the oven phase, my book eliminates that by going into real detail on oven settings and where and why it should be baked on a particular shelf or position. I also keep the equipment to a minimum and virtually everything required (equipment and ingredients) is available on the high street. Most importantly though, I wanted every recipe to look amazing as well as taste great. We all want some praise when we're presenting what we've made to family and friends. The book shows how to make bakes look fabulous easily and have the wow factor.

### Q Why so many Spanish-style recipes in the book?

We rarely see or experience Spanish baking over here in the UK. The recipes



Photo © Clare Winfield

in the book are what I was brought up eating. The bakes, techniques and flavour combinations will be new to most bakers over here and really should be tried as they taste amazing. The Spanish chapter is broad and includes recipes such as sweet and savoury celebration breads, olive oil biscuits right through to my mum's aniseed doughnuts, which are just to die for.

### Q What's your fascination with honey and how do you use it in your baking?

I keep bees, so I am very lucky to have a constant supply of honey on hand. What better way to sweeten a bake than with such an amazing and natural ingredient? I use it all the time. A tablespoon in a loaf dough adds an extra dimension, mix a little with cream for a mind blowing cake filling or use it as a glaze. There's a whole chapter on honey related bakes in my book, I never get tired of using it!

### Q What will you be getting up to next?

More baking! I have a really full diary with lots of diverse baking activities scheduled at the moment. I really enjoy baking for people and events, so that's where I'm going to head. I have plans of setting up my own bakery here in South Manchester and baking commercially.

The recipes on pages 24-25 are taken from *Bake It Great* by Luis Troyano, published by Pavilion Books, RRP £20. Photography by Clare Winfield.





## Bakewell cherry cupcakes

Makes 12

### FOR THE CAKES

150g (5½oz) soft unsalted butter

150g (5½oz) caster sugar

100g (3½oz) self-raising flour

120g (4¼oz) ground almonds

3 medium free-range eggs

1 tsp baking powder

finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed lemon

1 tsp almond extract

1 tbsp milk

### FOR THE FILLING

raspberry jam made with 100g (3½oz) fresh raspberries and

1 tbsp lemon juice, or use 150g (5½oz) shop-bought jam

### FOR THE ICING

400g (14oz) icing sugar

1 tsp almond extract

2 tbsp amaretto liqueur

juice of 1 lemon, strained (use the lemon that was zested)

12 glacé cherries – use different colours for the wow factor

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place a white greaseproof paper case in each hole of a 12-hole muffin tin.
- 2 Cream together the butter and sugar until pale and fluffy; this takes about 5 minutes in a kitchen mixer fitted with a paddle, or a little longer with a hand mixer. Add the flour, almonds, eggs, baking powder, lemon zest, almond extract and milk, and mix well until combined.
- 3 Put the cake mixture into a disposable piping bag, cut the end off the piping bag and pipe the mixture into each muffin case. Don't fill each case more than halfway – we want the sponge to rise but leave room at the top of the case to hold a good quantity of icing later on. Bake for 20-25 minutes until the tops are firm and a skewer inserted in the centre comes out completely clean.
- 4 Remove the cakes from the oven, take them out of the tin and immediately place them on a wire rack to cool.
- 5 Once completely cooled, use a cupcake corer or sharp knife to remove a piece of sponge from the centre of each cake. Fill the hole with about 1 teaspoon of jam and push the core back in.
- 6 To make the icing, place the icing sugar, almond extract and amaretto in a bowl. Add the lemon juice a little at a time and stir until you have a thick, smooth, glossy icing. Add a few drops of water if you don't have enough lemon juice to achieve the right consistency.
- 7 Spoon some icing on the top of each cake, until it's perfectly level with the top of the case, and place a whole glacé cherry in the middle of each one. Take your time here and make them all look the same for a stunning set of cupcakes. Leave the icing to set for a couple of hours or overnight before enjoying.





## Raspberry and honey salted shortbread

Makes 16

### FOR THE SHORTBREAD

425g (15oz) plain flour

150g (5½oz) caster sugar

3 tbsp cornflour

340g (12oz) fridge-cold unsalted butter, cut into  
2cm (¾in) cubes

4 tbsp freeze-dried raspberries

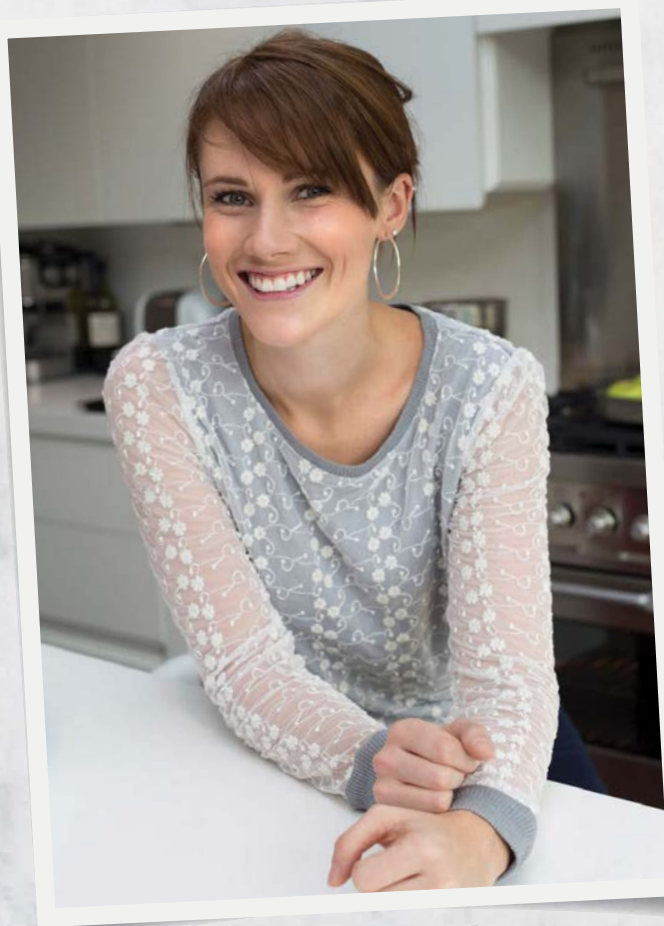
### FOR THE SALTED HONEY GLAZE

50g (1¾oz) runny honey

½ tsp coarse sea salt flakes

- 1 Put the flour, sugar and cornflour in a food processor fitted with a blade and give it a few quick pulses to mix it all up. Add the butter and pulse again until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add the freeze-dried raspberries and give it a quick pulse to just mix them in.
- 2 Grease and line two 23cm (9in) loose bottomed tart tins with discs of non-stick baking parchment. Place one on a set of scales and put just under half the mix into it. Do the same with the second tin and keep swapping them over until both tins contain half of the mix. Compact the mixture down evenly in each tin, using your fingers and palm of your hand. Place both tins in the fridge for 30 minutes.
- 3 Preheat the oven to 210°C/Gas Mark 6½.
- 4 Place both tins on the same oven shelf and bake for about 40 minutes until a deep golden colour. Remove from the oven.
- 5 Gently warm the honey in a microwave, but don't boil it. Pour half of the honey over each of the shortbreads and spread it evenly using a pastry brush.
- 6 Sprinkle some sea salt flakes evenly over both shortbreads and place both back in the oven for about 4 minutes.
- 7 Remove from the oven and cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then remove and place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 8 Cut each shortbread into eight wedges. They will keep in an airtight container for a week.





IN THE KITCHEN  
WITH...

## Cat \$ Dresser

You don't need to win a TV baking show to make your mark and Cathryn is still savouring the success from her 2012 appearances on *GBBO*.

It's no secret what the two most important things are to Cat – her family and baking! Since appearing on the third series of *The Great British Bake Off* in 2012 she's combined the two, bringing up her two children while continuing to bake, including running a local market stall with fellow contestant Sarah-Jane Willis selling their baked creations and then setting up her own bakery. Despite not making the final, Cat made quite an impression and has appeared at shows and published her own baking book too. *Let's Bake* (Orion Children's Books, RRP £12.99) has a recipe for every week of the year, 52 easy and delicious bakes, so there's something for every occasion. All the recipes are great for having your kids help you out with them, so it's a good chance to introduce the next generation to the joys of baking. You can follow Cat's exploits on Twitter @cat\_dresser or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/cathryndresser](http://www.facebook.com/cathryndresser). This sticky toffee and ginger pudding recipe comes from the *Magimix Patissier Recipe Book*, which Cat developed all the recipes for.



## Sticky toffee and ginger pudding

Serves 10-12

<b>200g (7oz) dates</b>	<b>1 tsp ground ginger</b>
<b>100g (3½oz) dried apricots</b>	<b>1 tsp ground cinnamon</b>
<b>3 pieces of stem ginger</b>	<b>3 free-range eggs</b>
<b>300ml (10fl oz) boiled water</b>	<b>FOR THE SAUCE</b>
<b>1 tsp bicarbonate of soda</b>	<b>150g (5½oz) unsalted butter</b>
<b>125g (4½oz) soft unsalted butter</b>	<b>125g (4½oz) dark muscavado sugar</b>
<b>100g (3½oz) caster sugar</b>	<b>1 tsp vanilla extract</b>
<b>75g (2¾oz) dark muscavado sugar</b>	<b>1 tbsp stem ginger syrup</b>
<b>2 tbsp buttermilk</b>	<b>250ml (9fl oz) double cream</b>
<b>250g (9oz) self-raising flour</b>	

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2 Chop the dates, apricots and stem ginger in the main processor bowl of a Magimix. Add the hot water and bicarbonate of soda, pulse a few times, and leave for 15 minutes.
- 3 After 15 minutes, purée the mixture and transfer to a patissier bowl fitted with the dough blade. Add the remaining ingredients and mix for 1 minute.
- 4 Pour the mixture into a buttered 2.5 litre (4½pt) ovenproof dish and bake for 35-40 minutes, until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean.
- 5 Melt the sugar, syrup and butter in a heavy based pan until the sugar has dissolved. Add the cream and vanilla, bring to a rapid boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for a further 5 minutes.
- 6 Prick the surface of the pudding all over with a skewer or cocktail stick and pour over two-thirds of the sauce.
- 7 Serve the remaining sauce on the side, along with a dollop of crème fraîche.



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